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PASTON LETTERS.

ORIGINAL LETTERS

WRITTEN DURING THE REIGNS OF

HENRY VI., EDWARD IV., AND RICHARD III.

BY

VARIOUS PERSONS OF RANK OR CONSEQUENCE:

CONTAINING MANY

CURIOUS ANECDOTES RELATIVE TO THAT TURBULENT AND BLOODY, BUT HITHERTO DARK, PERIOD OF OUR HISTORY;

AND ELUCIDATING NOT ONLY

PUBLIC MATTERS OF STATE, BUT LIKEWISE THE PRIVATE MANNERS OF THE AGE.

WITH

NOTES HISTORICAL AND EXPLANATORY;

AND AUTHENTICATED BY ENGRAVINGS OF AUTOGRAPHS AND SEALS.

By JOHN FENN, Esq., M.A., F.A.S.

A NEW EDITION,

DIGESTED IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER, WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES,

By A. RAMSAY.

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE,

COMPLETE.

20274
ac

LONDON:

HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

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[Henry VI. in his Youth.]
From Picture in King's College, Cambridge.

INTRODUCTION.

THE only printed edition of these valuable records of a past age is in four quarto volumes, edited and published by Sir John Fenn, two volumes in 1787, and two others in 1789; together with a fifth, prepared by him for publication, but not published till 1823, many years after his death, by his nephew, William Frere, Master of Downing College, Cambridge. This last volume contains letters of the dates of Edward IV., Edward V., Richard III., and Henry VII. The letters in each publication are arranged in a separate chronological series, although many of them refer to the same periods. This edition is of course far too expensive for the great mass of readers; the cost of a copy is eight guineas, and it is troublesome to follow the proper order of succession under such an arrangement. This has occasioned the present attempt to make such valuable matter more accessible, by reprinting the volumes in a cheap form, and in a more regular order, abridging some of the letters which are either of little importance or repetitions of what is contained in others, or relating to uncontested and well-known historical events involving no matters of peculiar or personal interest; but wherever we have deemed it right to abridge or abstract we have in every case preserved as much of the original form and language as possible. In the original edition two forms of the letters are given, one an exact transcript of the letters themselves in the old and very variable and therefore difficult orthography; and the other, which we have followed, with the orthography modernised, but no liberty has been taken, without notice, of either the words or their arrangement.

In a recent number of the 'Edinburgh Review,' in an article reviewing Mr. Tytler's work 'England under the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary,' in which were introduced many historical documents and private letters of the period, it was contended that such a work could not be popular, nor deserved to be so. The reviewer argued, that general readers could not be expected to take the pains or feel sufficient interest to examine into details; and in the few cases where they did, they should themselves have recourse to the originals; for selections, copied at the risk of error in transcription, and modernised in the spelling, were likely to convey false impressions frequently of the facts related, and still more frequently of the modes of thought and expression used by our ancestors.

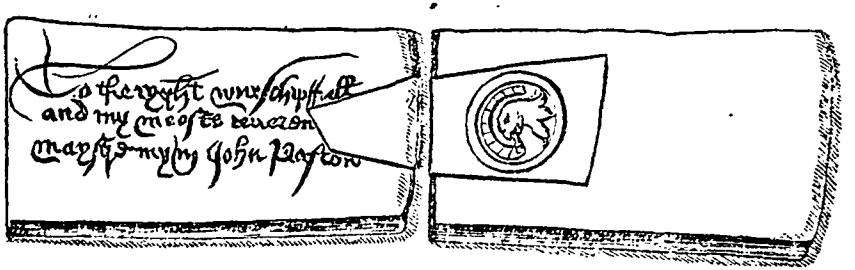
We believe the opinions here expressed are held, or rather acted upon, by many who recoil from the idea of reading "historical documents" as they would from reading a modern act of parliament for a railroad or an inclosure. But the objections of the reviewer, if valid, would shut out the public entirely from *any* knowledge of these interesting pictures of our earlier history; for many of the collections of MSS. are not accessible to the public, and few or none could read them on account of the difficulties arising from the hand-writing, he contractions, and the ever-varying orthography. Fenn has in a subsequent paragraph given an answer to most of the items; but the only part of the objection of any weight—that history cannot be taught in this way—does not apply to this work. It is not historical, though occasionally touching

on public matters, but domestic; and it cannot but be pleasing to mark how the passions, feelings, modes of thought, and prejudices are acted upon by the political situation, institutions, and education of the age in which the writers lived. The 'Original Letters written during the reigns of Henry VI., Edward IV., and Richard III.,' are not those of statesmen or mere politicians, but of men and women occasionally of course mixed up with public affairs, but treating of them only as affecting their private interest. "The artless writers of these letters," says Sir John Fenn, the editor of these papers, "here communicate their private affairs, or relate the reports of the day; they tell their tale in the plain and uncouth phrase of the time; they aim not at shining by art or eloquence, and bespeak credit by total carelessness of correction and ornament."[1] Indeed we have probably in no books so detailed and wholly unprejudiced a description as in these of the national domestic and social manners and modes of action and thought, together with the semi-public relations of the people, which, too minute for the notice of history, are even on that account the more popularly interesting, developing as they do the feelings and state of the most numerous classes in the country, and explaining and illumining incidentally much of the cause and course of many historical events. In many of these letters we see, or think we see, much of the peculiar principles which have distinguished us as a nation both before and since their date, and which, constantly instilled, have been constantly perpetuated:—untiring activity, indomitable resolution, and confident self-reliance, united to a full sense of the power and advantages of co-operation, producing a willingness to submit to the most implicit subordination for the attainment of a desired object, provided that object is kept steadily in view; and a readiness, if left alone, to act alone. In this collection we see how mothers thought there were things more to be dreaded for their sons than death; who "had leu (*rather*) they wer fayr beryed than lost for defaute;" and it was doubtless from such sources that our forefathers were enabled to show "the mettle of their pasture," and that they "were worth their breeding," alike in the bloody conflicts of Agincourt, Trafalgar, or Waterloo, and in the civil contests of the time here spoken of, as in the more peaceable but not less arduous struggles for freedom in the houses of parliament and the courts of law. There was then as now the strong practical common sense, sometimes expressed, we hope and believe, more harshly in words than in acts. For although in the letters every marriage is made to rest upon the sole basis of property, we have little doubt that then, as now, this was only pursued in part so far as to ensure independence and comfort, and that the feelings of the parties were rarely if ever violated: although law-suits were prosecuted with great eagerness, and in cases of disputed title, with great violence, and all parties complain of delay, and injustice, and oppression, and corruption, yet the complaints seem generally to be, as now, the common language of all litigants, particularly of defeated ones: although men here avowedly change their political sides because they think they shall benefit themselves thereby, and seem more openly to consult prudence than principle, yet on the whole they seem as now to make their interests and principles usually to agree, and the letters being confidential, may account for the occasional openness and bluntness of expression.

It may be remarked that these letters afford little direct information as to the means of internal communication. Journeys appear to have been made usually on horseback and written communications were sent either by special messengers, or entrusted to persons about to travel,

[1] Original Edit. vol. i. p. xv.

letters being then immediately written in haste to such acquaintance or friends as might chance to reside near to such places as the traveller passed, or to which he was ultimately destined. We find many allusions in the letters here published to such opportunities having been embraced. Great care, however, seems to have been taken to preserve the integrity of the letter. It was carefully folded, and fastened at the end by a sort of paper strap, upon which the seal was affixed; and under the seal a string, a silk thread, or even a straw was frequently placed running around the letter. We give below a specimen, reduced in size, of the manner in which letters were folded and sealed; and many of the seals, selected from those given by Fenn, are introduced at the end of the letters to which they were attached,—an arrangement we have thought more satisfactory than giving them in one or two pages of plates:—



The limited means of communication must have operated much to the domestic discomfort of the time. It appears to have been a matter of course that a man leaving his home, whether on business or pleasure, must leave his family behind him, and that even a settled occupation in the capital, where the individuals had estates, interests, and connexions in the country, as in the case of the Pastons, Jenney and others, could not overcome the difficulties and inconveniences arising from a want of facility of movement and intercourse. We learn that there were carriers, but we are not told how their journeyings were regulated, but probably not on fixed days, or to any one appointed place, but depending on their getting a remunerating load, and going rather to a district than any one place. There can be little doubt that they were also letter-carriers, as it would form a light and profitable addition to their business. It is curious to observe how the profit thus arising from the conveyance of matters at once important from their contents, yet of small bulk, should have ultimately led to the establishment of a post-office; while at a more recent period, when the post-office income formed a material item in the national revenue, it was found that the carrier still retained so large a part of this business, even in defiance of law, as to form a material part of the case justifying the reduction of the postage rate to so small a sum as a penny.

As of course all the value of such a collection depends on its authenticity, we shall quote as much as may be necessary from Sir John Fenn's own account of them in his introduction to the first volume.

"It will now be necessary to satisfy the reader of the authenticity of the letters here laid before him, by presenting him with a pedigree of their descent, accompanied with such observations as have arisen in the mind of the editor, from an accurate examination of every one of them.

"These letters were most of them written by, or to particular persons of the family of Paston, in Norfolk (who lived in the reigns of Henry VI., Edward IV., Richard III., and Henry VII.), were carefully preserved in that family for several descents, and were finally in the possession of the Earl of Yarmouth [their lineal descendants, with whom the male line of the family terminated]; they then became the property of that great collector and antiquary Peter le Neve, Esq., Norroy; from him they devolved to Mr. Martin, by his marriage with Mrs. le Neve, and were a part of his collections purchased by Mr. Worth, from whom, in 1774, they came to the editor."

"The hand-writing in some of the letters is, though black and thick, very true and legible; in others, the decyphering of it has been attended with much trouble and difficulty."

"The thought of transcribing [or rather translating] each letter, according to the rules of modern orthography and punctuation, arose from a hint which the editor received from an antiquary, respectable for his knowledge and publications; whose opinion was, that many would be induced to read these letters, for the sake of the various matter they contain, for their style, and for their curiosity, who, not having paid attention to ancient modes of writing and abbreviations, would be deterred from attempting such a task, by their uncouth appearance in their original garb."

"In the transcribed letters, except in the spelling and pointing, as little alteration is made as was possible; the turn of expression and phraseology of the original, even where the grammar is defective, being preserved. The obsolete words are continued, but the sense is expressed by modern words or phrases, in italics between parentheses." We introduce here one of the letters in its original orthography, &c., and we select one written by a secretary and signed by a peer as a fair specimen, with the copy in the parallel column as it appears in the present edition. The autographs added to many of the letters will afford sufficient specimens of the writing of the period.

To the right worshipful and with all myn herte right entirely-belovid brother, the Viscount Beaumont.

Right worshipful and wt all myn herte right entierly beloved brother I recomaunde me to you thenking right herteli youre good brotherhode for youre gode and gentilll l're the whiche it hath liked you to sende unto me nowe late and like it you to knowe I p'seeve by the tenor of the seid l're youre gode desire of crtein dubete that I owe unto you. In gode feith brother it is so wt me at this tyme I have but easy stuffe of money wtinne me, for so mecha as the seison of the yer is not yet growen so that I may not plese youre seid gode brotherhode as God knoweth my wille and entent were to do and I had it.

Nevrtheles and it like you I sende you bi my sonne Stafford an obligacion wherof of late tyme I have resceivid part of the dubete therinne comp'sid, the residue of whiche I prai you to resceve bi the seid obligacion and

Right worshipful, and with all mine heart right entirely beloved brother, I recommend me to you, thanking right heartily your good brotherhood for your good and gentle letters, the which it hath liked you to send unto me now late; and like it you to know, I perceive, by the tenor of the said letter, your good desire of certain debt that I owe unto you.

In good faith, brother, it is so with me at this time that I have but easy stuff of money within me, for so much as the season of the year is not yet grown, so that I may not please your said good brotherhood, as God knoweth my will and intent were to do and (*if*) I had it.

Nevertheless and (*if*) it like you, I send you by my son Stafford an obligation, whereof of late time I have received part of the debt

that I may have an acquitance y^{r}of and to yeve credence unto my seid sonne in such thing as he shall say unto you^{r} gode brotherhode on my behalve.

Right worshipfull and w^{t} all myn herte right entirely-belovid brother I beseche the blissed Trinite p's^{r}ve you in honor and p'sp'ite.

Writen at my Castell of Makestok the xvij day of Marche.

Yowre trew and feyfull broder

H. Buckingh'm.

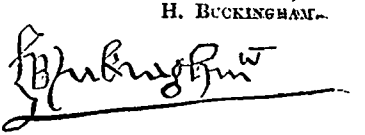
therein comprised; the residue of which I pray you to receive by the said obligation, and that I may have an acquittance thereof, and to give credence unto my said son in such thing as he shall say unto your good brotherhood on my behalf.

Right worshipful, and with all mine heart right entirely-beloved brother, I beseech the Blessed Trinity preserve you in honour and prosperity.

Written at my Castle of Makestock, the 17th day of March.

Your true and faithful brother,

H. Buckingham.



Sir John Fenn says; "the paper on which they are written is of different degrees of fineness; some sheets being rough, and, what we now call very coarse, while others are perfectly smooth and of a much finer texture; these different sorts, however, must have been all of foreign manufacture, since the art of paper-making was not introduced into England before the reign of Henry VII.[1]

"The size of the whole sheets of paper varies from ten to twelve inches in length, as the writing runs, and from about sixteen to seventeen, or eighteen inches in depth.

"The various sizes of the letters themselves are from ten to twelve inches in length, to three, six, eight, ten, or twelve inches, or more in depth, according to the quantity of the matter written.

"Most of the letters have been neatly folded up in different shapes, from three to four inches in length, and from one and an half to three inches in breadth, having either a hole cut by a knife, and a piece of paper put through it; or threads drawn through by a needle, and brought under the seal, by which they were fastened.

"Many of the seals are so far perfect as to discover the impressions of arms, crests, letters, heads, or some other devices; some of them have likewise a braid of string, or straw twisted round the impression, and fixed when the wax was warm.

"The dates are sometimes, though seldom, fully expressed in the letters, except in some of those of particular writers, as Sir John Fastolf and Sir John Paston; the day of the month only, or the saint's name, to whom the day is dedicated, being generally all the date they have.

"The editor has taken some trouble to supply these defects, and to fix the exact dates of the letters from calendars, from some fact mentioned, or other *data* in the letters themselves, and by these means to place the different letters in chronological order. In this his success has in a great measure answered his own expectations, and he hopes those of his readers will not be disappointed, since they may not be aware how much time and trouble the ascertaining of the date of a single letter has sometimes cost him.

[1] Sir John Fenn gives many plates of the paper-marks, but they offer nothing peculiar or interesting, except as they assist in establishing the age of the writing.

"It is proper here to observe, that the date of the year is always supposed to commence on the 25th day of March; and that the full dates are always placed at the end of the transcribed letters; where, notwithstanding all the endeavours of the editor, some still remain uncertain as to the exact year, &c."

Sir John Fenn performed his laborious task on the whole with much ability, and his annotations, identifying and giving an account of the personages writing or mentioned in the letters, are very satisfactory and complete. We have found occasion to differ with his translation or his explanations on some occasions, but they are few considering the difficulty and labour of his undertaking. There is, however, one point upon which we think he errs, and upon which he takes every opportunity of dilating; we mean the barbarity, violence, bloodthirstiness, and corruption of the times. In the notes we have ventured to suggest another and we think a juster conclusion, and in corroboration of our view we extract the following passages from the 'Pictorial History of England.' After the first battle of St. Alban's it is said:—"No acts of vengeance were committed: it was considered that the Somerset faction had suffered sufficiently in the deaths of the lords in the affair of St. Alban's. Not a drop of blood was spilt, nor a single attainder passed." And "there were some essential points of difference in the civil wars of the two countries; the objects of the English factions were loftier and better defined than those of the French parties; they deliberated a long time before they drew the sword; and, when they drew it, they wielded it in a more manly fashion. Instead of proceeding by surprises and assassinations, sieges of castles and paltry skirmishes,—instead of dragging on an indecisive war year after year, harrowing and wasting the substance of the poor people, each party collected its forces at once, and hastened to try the issue at once in an open field of battle."[1] The general tenor of these letters confirms this view; few or none fell except in battle, or immediately afterwards as traitors taken in arms against what was called by the victorious party their sovereign, and of those generally only the more active and powerful leaders, and it is remarkable how easily the middling and respectable classes were allowed to get off. After Cade's rebellion the punishments were neither numerous nor bloody; and even under the harsh and severe reign of Edward IV. only one person of these classes immediately connected with these letters, Sir Thomas Todenham, suffered death on the scaffold, and that was for a treasonable correspondence with Queen Margaret after the captivity of Henry VI., her expulsion from the kingdom, and the recognition by parliament of Edward IV. as the rightful sovereign.' Several were indeed attainted, but appear to have been shortly restored, with little damage to their rank or property. Sir John also laments over the obstructions to and corruptions of justice. As we have already had occasion to remark, these laments are chiefly poured out on the statements of unsuccessful suitors; but considering the turbulence of the times, we are more inclined to wonder at the unimpeded course of the laws. The assizes are held regularly. In Letter cxii. we see a bribe offered and refused, as also the money offered for services done, the sheriff saying he had none deserved, and adding that he would serve J. Paston, for whom the application was made, as far as he well might, and that he would endeavour to empannel a fair jury, and this in a period when many of what are now fees were considered as presents. Again, in Letter xiv., Sir John Fastolf desires Stephen Scrope to thank his father, one of the judges of the King's Bench, "for the *rightful* favour shown me in the matter of Sir Thomas Todenham." The forms of the courts

[1] Pict. Hist. of England, vol. ii. p. 93.

were not so precisely fixed as at present, and there were no doubt opportunities of favouring parties by expediting their causes and in other ways, without materially violating either law or justice; and though some parties might feel aggrieved and complain, we think the irregularities seldom arose from bribery. In political matters no doubt the judges had their prejudices, and the unfixed forms were much oftener, it is probable, wrested to the disadvantage of the persons opposed to them.

Sir John also asserts the undue and dominating power of the great noblemen of the time over the elections of members of parliament. We have endeavoured to show, in our additional notes to the letters alluding to these practices, that they do not warrant the conclusion that such influences existed. The leading political noblemen and landowners no doubt used then, as now, all the influence they possessed, and their desires may have been expressed in plainer language than is used at present, and more directly from their own mouths; but we think it clear from their letters that their wishes were often successfully opposed by the freeholders, and that still oftener they were forced to make compromises with each other on the best terms they could. That the privilege was not considered with anything like indifference by the electors is proved by the passing of two acts in the reign of Henry VI.,[1] and we quote an extract from Hume to this effect, in order to give at the same time his opinion of the matter:—

"In the eighth and tenth of this king," says Hume, "laws were enacted, limiting the electors to such as were possessed of forty shillings a-year in land, free from all burdens within the county." * * * * "The preamble of the statute is remarkable: 'Whereas the elections of knights have of late, in many counties of England, been made by outrages and excessive numbers of people, many of them of small substance and value, yet pretending to a right equal to the best knights and esquires; whereby manslaughters, riots, batteries, and divisions among the gentlemen and other people of the same counties, shall very likely rise and be, unless due remedy be provided in this behalf,' &c. We may learn from these expressions what an important matter the election of a member of parliament was now become in England: that assembly was beginning in this period to assume great authority; the Commons had it much in their power to enforce the execution of the laws; and if they failed of success in this particular, it proceeded less from any exorbitant power in the crown than from the licentious spirit of the aristocracy, and perhaps from the rude education of the age, and their own ignorance of the advantages resulting from a regular administration of justice."[2] One of the letters in this collection gives an account of an election riot, arising from a delay on the part of the sheriff in issuing the writ, but which does not appear to have exceeded that of an election mob of the present day; some 'battery' perhaps among one another, some broken windows, but no manslaughter nor any apparent intervention of the nobility. In this same reign also the Commons made their importance felt, by interfering against the received theory and avowed opinions of the aristocracy that the right of appointing regents and protectors lay with them only, in the nomination of the Duke of York as protector for the second time, and their assent is formally introduced into the act passed to ratify the election of the peers.[3]

But, after all, the chief interest of this collection will be found in its domestic and social character. We see the modes of living, of dress, of educating the sons and daughters of the

[1] Statutes at Large, 8 Hen. VI. cap. 7, and 10 Hen. VI. cap. 2.
[2] Hume's Hist. of England—remarks at the close of the reign of Henry VI.
[3] Pict. Hist. of England, vol. ii. p. 93.

middling classes; we are told of the little transactions that enliven or distract the quietude of private life, the quarrels with neighbours, the slanders of enemies, of marriages, deaths, the making and executing of wills, and incidentally of the commerce and manufactures of the country. We discover that the people were not so priest ridden as has been asserted and believed; and that priests were by no means above the law; though their superior education and abilities made them useful and therefore influential; and we have a specimen of the style of popular preaching. We are shown also the great extent of parental authority, and the lowly and submissive style used by children to and of their parents, and by the wife to the husband, which will not fail to be noticed by the reader; as also the extreme respect and formality with which all correspondents address each other. In all such points we have no record so complete and so satisfactory in any other period of our history.

We have now only a few words to add of our share in the present edition. We have carefully compared the translation with the original transcript, and corrected many inaccuracies of the worthy editor silently, where they were of minor importance; in other cases we have marked our alterations or additions by brackets [ ], or noticed them in the notes. We have retained most of Sir John Fenn's annotations, to which we have added such of our own as we have thought necessary either for correcting or explaining them, marking these additions also by inclosing them in brackets. We have rarely altered his chronological arrangements, as many of the letters do not admit of affixing to them a precise date, and where we have done so it is noticed, and the reasons given in a note.

The chronological order of Sir J. Fenn's edition places at the beginning two documents both much prior in point of date to any of the succeeding letters, and neither possessing the character of the rest of the collection. The first is, "Articles declaring how the Earl of Warwick took the charge of Henry VI.;" the other is, "A petition against Sir William Paston, knight, a judge in the Court of Common Pleas, by W. Dalling." As, however, they are both curious, particularly the first mentioned, we have thought it better to append them to this introduction than to print them in the body of the work.

On the back of the parchment on which these articles are transcribed is written "The requests of the Erle of Warwick," and then the following memorandum: "xxix° die Novemb. A° undecimo apud West^m lecti fuerũt p'ntes Articuli corã Dñis infra subscribentibz et ad eosd^m R'nsiones ibid^m dabant^r continuè q^d infra patet, p'ntibus Dñis infrascriptis."

Articles declaring how the Earl of Warwick[1] *took the charge of King Henry VI.*

For the good rule, demeaning, and surety of the king's person, and draught of him to virtue and cunning (*knowledge*) and eschewing of any thing that might give impeachment or let thereto, or cause any charge, default, or blame to be laid upon the Earl of Warwick at any time without his desert, he considering that peril and business of his charge about the

[1] Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, was born in 1380, and, whether we consider him as a soldier or statesman, was one of the most considerable personages of his time. In 1408 he visited the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and on his journey thither acquitted himself with the greatest valour at tournaments, and other acts of valour in the courts of several princes. King Henry V. for his great merit appointed him guardian and preceptor to his infant son, which appointment upon his death was confirmed by parliament. In consequence of this trust he was recalled from France, where he had a principal command under the Duke of Bedford, and upon that duke's decease, in 1435, he returned thither again as regent. He died at the castle of Rouen in Normandy, on the 30th of April, 1439, and his body, by his own desire being brought into England, was deposited for a time in the collegiate church of Warwick, till the sumptuous chapel, which he had directed to be built, should be ready for its reception. This chapel, together with the magnificent tomb of its founder, cost 2481*l.* 4*s.* 7½*d.*

king's person groweth so, that that authority and power, given to him before, sufficeth him nought without more thereto, desireth therefore these things that follow:—

1. First, that considering that the charge of the rule, demeaning, and governance, and also of nurture of the king's person, resteth upon the said earl whilst it shall like the king, and the peril, danger, and blame, if any lack or default were in any of these, the which lack or default might be caused by ungodly or unvirtuous men, if any such were about his person; he desireth therefore for the good of the king and for his own surety to have power and authority to name, ordain, and assign, and, for cause that shall be thought to him reasonable, to remove those that shall be about the king's person of what estate or condition that they be, not intending to comprehend in this desire the steward, chamberlain, treasurer, controller, nor sergeants of offices, save such as serve about the king's person and for his mouth.

Rño. (*Reponsio.*) Answer. As toward the naming, ordinance, and assignation before said, it is agreed, so that he take in none of the four knights nor esquires for the body, without the advice of my Lord of Bedford,[1] him being in England, and him being out, of my Lord of Gloucester,[2] and of the remanent of the king's council.

2. Item, the said earl desireth that where he shall have any person in his discretion suspect (*suspected*) of misgovernance, and not behoveful nor expedient to be about the king, except the estates of the house, that he may put them from exercise and occupation of the king's service, till that he shall mowe [*be able to*] have speech with my Lords of Bedford or of Gloucester, and with the other lords of the king's council, to that end that the default of any such person [*being*] known unto him, shall mowe ordain thereupon as them (*they*) shall think be expedient and behoveful.

Answer. It is agreed as it is desired.

3. Item, the said earl desireth that, for sickness and other causes necessary and reasonable, he may, by warning to my Lords of Bedford or Gloucester, and the king's council be and stand freely discharged of the said occupation and business about the king's person, under the favour and good grace of the king, my Lords of Bedford and Gloucester, and other lords of the king's council.

Answer. It is agreed as it is desired.

4. Item, that considering how, blessed be God, the king is grown in years, in stature of his person, and also in conceit and knowledge of his high and royal authority and estate, the which naturally cause him, and from day to day as he groweth shall cause him more and more, to grudge with chastising, and to loath it, so that it may reasonably be doubted lest he will conceive against the said earl, or any other that will take upon him to chastise him for his defaults, displeasure or indignation therefore, the which without due assistance is not easy to be born. It like therefore to my Lord of Gloucester and to all the lords of the king's council to promitte (*promise*) to the said earl and assure him that they shall firmly and truly assist him in the exercise of the charge and occupation that he hath about the king's person, namely in chastising of him for his defaults, and support the said earl therein; and if the king at any time will conceive for that cause indignation against the said earl, my said Lord of Gloucester and lords shall do all their true diligence and power to remove the king therefrom.

Answer. It is agreed as it is desired.

5. Item, the said earl desireth, that forasmuch as it shall be necessary to remove the king's person at divers times into sundry places as the cases may require, that he may have power and authority to remove the king by his discretion into what place him (*he*) thinketh necessary for the health of his body and surety of his person.

[1] John Plantagenet, Duke of Bedford, brother to the late king, and regent of France, was one of the most valiant and accomplished princes of his age. He knighted his nephew, King Henry VI. in 1425, and dying at Paris in 1435, was buried under a sumptuous monument in Our Lady's Church at Rouen, which, when Lewis XI. was counselled to deface, he nobly replied, "Touch it not; let the body of that great man rest in peace, which when alive would have disquieted the proudest of us all."

[2] Humphrey Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, protector of the realm of England, and youngest brother to Henry V. was a scholar and a statesman. At a parliament holden at St. Edmund's Bury, in 1446-7, he was arrested for high treason, and shortly after was found murdered in his bed in the abbey there, by the contrivance and procurement, as it was supposed of Queen Margaret, and the then Marquis of Suffolk, in conjunction with the Cardinal of Winchester. He was buried at St. Alban's, and in 1703 his body was discovered preserved in a kind of pickle.

Answer. It is agreed as it is desired.

6. Item, sith (*since*) the said earl hath take upon him the governance of the king's person, he desireth that all the estates, officers and servants of the king's house, of what estate and condition they be, have special commandment and charge given by my Lords of Bedford and Gloucester, and by the lords of the king's council, that in all manner [*of*] things seen and advised by the said earl's discretion, that is for the king's estate, worship, health, and profit, by his commandment and ordainance, they be attendant and obeissant in accomplishing thereof.

Answer. It is agreed as it is desired.

7. Item, forasmuch as the said earl hath knowledge that in speech that hath been had unto the king at part (*apart*) and in private, not hearing the said earl, nor any of the knights set about his person nor assigned by the said earl, he hath been stirred by some from his learning, and spoken to of diverse matters not behoveful; the said earl doubting the harm that might fall to the king, and the inconvenience that might ensue of such speech at part, if it were suffered, desireth that in all speech to be had with the king, he or one of the four knights, or some person to be assigned by the said earl, be present and privy to it.

Answer. This article is agreed, excepting such persons, as for nighness of blood, and for their estate, ought of reason to be suffered to speak with the king.

8. Item, to the intent that it may be known to the king that it proceedeth of the assent, advice, and agreement, of my Lord of Gloucester, and all my lords of the king's council, that the king be chastised for his defaults or trespasses, and that for awe thereof he forbear the more to do amiss, and intend the more busily to virtue and to learning; the said earl desireth that my lord of Gloucester, and my said other lords of the council or great part of them, that is to say, the chancellor and treasurer, and of everych (*every*) estate in the council spiritual and temporal, some come to the king's presence, and there to make to be declared to him there agreement in that behalf.

Answer. When the king cometh next to London, all his council shall come to his presence, and there this shall be declared to him.

9. Item, the said earl, that all his days hath above all other earthly things desired, and ever shall, to keep his truth and worship unblemished and unhurt, and may not for all that let (*prevent*) malicious and untrue men to make informations of his person, such as they may not, nor dare not stand by, nor be not true; beseecheth therefore my Lord of Gloucester, and all my said lords of the council, and if they or any of them have been informed of anything that may be or found to his charge or default, and namely in his occupation and rule about the king's person, that the said earl may have knowledge thereof, to the intent that he may answer thereto, and not dwell in heavy or sinister conceit or opinion without his desert, and without answer.

Answer. It is agreed.

[1] CROMWELL.	[5] J. BATHEN CANC.
H. GLOUCESTRE.	[6] J. ROFFEN.
[2] J. EBOR.	[7] SUFFOLK.
[3] P. ELIEN.	[8] H. STAFFORD.
[4] W. LINCOLN.	[9] J. HUNTYNGTON.

29 November, 1432. 11 H. VI.

[1] Ralph Lord Cromwell, was Lord Treasurer in 1434.

[2] John Kempe was translated from London to York in 1426, and from this see to Canterbury in 1452, where he died very old in 1453.

[3] Philip Morgan Bishop of Worcester was translated to Ely in 1426; he was a man of learning and wisdom, and died in 1434.

[4] William Grey was translated to the see of Lincoln, from that of London, in 1431, and died in 1435.

[5] John Stafford, Bishop of Bath and Wells, and brother to the Earl of Stafford, was Lord Chancellor. He was promoted to the see of Canterbury in 1443, and died in 1452.

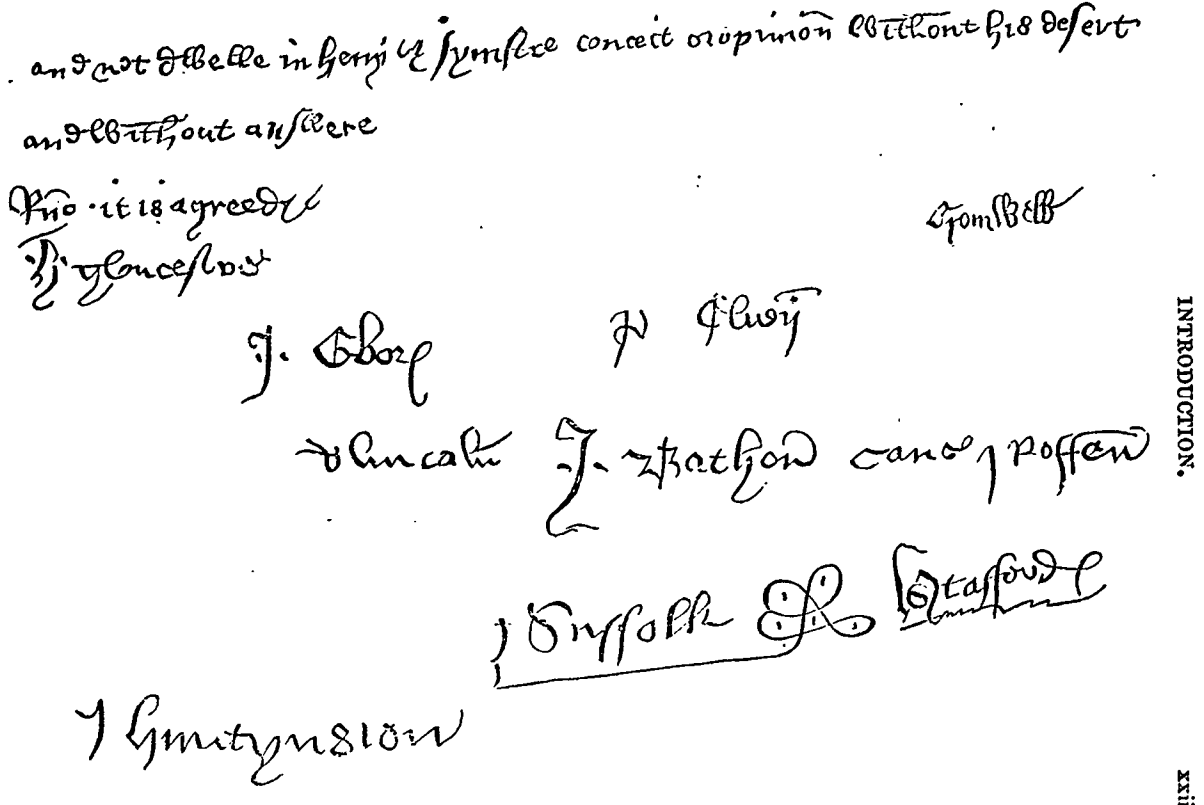
[6] John Langdon, elected Bishop of Rochester in 1421, was both an antiquary and historian, and died at the council of Basil in 1434.

[7] William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, was, in 1443, made Marquis, and in 1448 created Duke of Suffolk. He was prime minister to Henry VI, and the favourite of his queen. Being banished to appease the national discontent in 1450, he was taken on the sea, and beheaded without trial.

[8] Humphrey Stafford, Earl of Stafford, and in 1444 Duke of Buckingham, was killed at the battle of Northampton in 1460, where he jointly commanded the royal army with the Duke of Somerset. He was by his mother great-grandson to Edward III.

[9] John Holland restored as Earl of Huntington, in 1416, was afterwards created Duke of Exeter. He was Admiral of England, and Constable of the Tower of London. He died in 1447, and was buried in St. Catherine's Church, near the Tower,

As a specimen of the whole, a fac-simile of the conclusion of these articles, with all the autographs placed as they are subscribed to the original parchment, is given below.



On the back of this petition, in a hand of the time, is written "Falsa Billa Willi Dalling tra' p'liament temp'e pr. Henr. Grey tcciodecimo Regis Henr. vjti." By this endorsement the bill appears to have been declared a false one, and the petition rejected; it may therefore be supposed that the accusations were ill-grounded. The reason for the charge might be this, that when Sir William was an acting lawyer he received general retaining fees from corporations, religious societies, and persons of consequence, to be their standing counsel, and which possibly might be continued to him after he became a judge, as a mark of their respect and as a reward for the good services he had formerly done them; this might certainly give cause to suspect his impartiality when any causes in which these societies, &c. were concerned came before him. This petition seems to originate from some part he had taken in favour of a lady, whereby the wardship of a minor was made less valuable to the king, or, most probably, to the person who had purchased it from the crown. Such a conduct in those times must have appeared very extraordinary, when the judges were entirely under the regal control.

Sir William Paston was born in 1378, became a judge of the Common Pleas in 1430, and from the propriety of his conduct was called The Good Judge. The following memorandum recorded by his widow of his death deserves notice, as it shows the reverence paid to his corpse, by kneeling at the foot of the bed on which it lay.

"On the Thurseday at nyght before our Lady's day the Assũpcon betwixt xj and xij of the clokk in the yor of or Lord God mcccc and xliiij, the Sondays l're on the D, died my husbond, God assoyle his sowle; and on the Fryday after I sent for John Paston, John Dam, &c. and on the Wedynysday after cam John Paston, &c. And on the Fryday John Paston, John Dam, and I yede into the chambre, and they desyred of me to see the wyll; I lete them see it; and John Dam redde it, and when he had redde it, John Paston walkyd up and down in the chamb'e, John Dam and I knelyd at the beddy's fete."

A petition to the Commons of England against Sir William Paston, knight, a judge of the Court of Common Pleas, by William Dalling.

PLEASE it to the right sage and wise Commons of this present parliament, that where(*as*) every justice of the king is sworn that he should not take no fees nor rewards for to be of counsel with no man, but only with our sovereign lord the king, and thereto they be sworn.

Please it to (*the*) Commons of the present parliament that William Paston, one of the justices of our sovereign lord (*the*) king taketh divers fees and rewards of divers persons within the shires of Norfolk and Suffolk, and is withhold with every matter in the said countries; that is to say—

Of the town of Yarmouth, l^{s}. yearly.
Of the Abbot of St. Benet's xxvj^{s}. viij^{d}.
Of the Prior of St. Faith's xx^{s}.
Of my Lady Rothenhale[1] xx^{s}.
Of the Prior of Norwich xl^{s}.
Of the Prior of Pentney xx^{s}.
Of the town of Lynn xl^{s}.
Of the Prior of Walsingham xx^{s}.

And of Katharine Shelton[2] x marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) against the king for to be of her counsel for to destroy the right of the king and of his ward, that is for to say, Ralph,[3] son and heir of John Shelton.

1434. 13 H. VI.

[1] This sentence in the original has a line drawn over it. She was a widow of Sir John Rothenhale, knight, and dying at Caister, by Yarmouth, in 1440, was buried in Norwich cathedral.

[2] Catharine, widow of William Shelton, Esq. and daughter of Simon Barret, was grandmother to Ralph, and died in 1456.

[3] Sir Ralph Shelton, knight, son and heir of John Shelton, Esq. was born in 1430; he married, Margaret, daughter of Robert Clere, Esq. of Ormesby and was high-sheriff of Norfolk, &c. in 1487. He died before 1500, and in the east window of the north isle of Shelton church, in Norfolk, were the effigies of him and his wife, in surcoats of their arms. He built both the church and hall, but the latter has been long in ruins.

PASTON LETTERS.

HENRY VI., FROM ABOUT 1435—1460.

LETTER I.—(III. vol. iii. p. 17.)

We here see a lady of the first rank going to London in the beginning of the winter to the house of one of her dependents, for which she had agreed with him for the time of her stay in town; and by her stuff was meant most probably her beds, hangings, and other matters for the fitting up of her lodgings.

To our right trusty and heartily well-beloved John Paston, Esq.

KATHARINE, DUCHESS OF NORFOLK.

RIGHT trusty and entirely well beloved, we greet you well, heartily as we can. And forasmuch as we purpose with grace of Jesu to be at London within brief time, we pray you that your place there may be ready for us, for we will send our stuff thither tofore [*before*] our coming; and such agreement as we took with you for the same, we shall duly perform it with the might of Jesu, who have you in his blessed keeping.

Written at Epworth, the 2nd day of October. [1]

Epworth, in Lincolnshire,
in the Island of Axholm,
2nd of October, after 1434.

LETTER II.—(I. vol. i. p. 3.)

We are in this letter acquainted with the first introduction of a young lady to the gentleman intended for her husband, and are informed that she "made hym gentil cher in gyntyl wise:" but it appears somewhat extraordinary, that being the heiress of a family of rank and fortune, any intimation should be given to the father of the lover of presenting her with a gown, and especially that "ye gounc nedyth for to be had." [It may be observed, however, that at this period, and for a considerable time afterwards, money was relatively much scarcer than at present, and persons of large landed property were often much distressed for want of sums which appear now almost ludicrously small. A gown then, also, was a costly article. In the privy purse expenses of Elizabeth of York, wife of Henry VII., published by Sir N. H. Nicolas, while a workman's daily wages are set down at 6d., we find a "furre and a half of fox for a gown of russet, xiis." and xv. yards and a half of black damask for a gown for the queen, at viis. the yard, cviiis. vid."]

To my worshipful husband, William Paston,[2] be this letter taken.

DEAR husband, I recommend me to you, &c. Blessed be God I send you good tidings of the coming and the bringing home of the gentlewoman [3] that ye weeten (*know*) of from Reedham this same night, according to appointment that ye made there for yourself.

And as for the first acquaintance between John Paston [4] and the said gentlewoman, she made him gentle cheer in gentle wise, and

[1] Katharine Duchess of Norfolk, widow of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, who died in 1433, was daughter of Ralph Lord Neville, first Earl of Westmoreland, by Jane, daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. After the duke's death she married in succession, Thomas Strangeways, Esq., John Viscount Beaumont, and Sir John Widville, brother to Anthony Earl Rivers; wife or widow to one of which she most probably was at the time this letter was written, though it might be written during her widowhood as Duchess of Norfolk, as it is dated from the late duke's seat at Epworth, or Epleworth.

[2] Sir W. Paston, knt., a judge of the Common Pleas, was born in 1378, died in 1444, æt. 66.

[3] Margaret, daughter and heir of John Mauteby, Esq., of Mauteby in Norfolk, by Margaret, daughter of John Berney, of Reedham, Esq., and who, soon after the writing of this letter, became wife of John Paston, Esq.

[4] Son of Sir William and Agnes Paston, was born about 1420, and died in 1466.

said he was verily your son; and so I hope there shall need no great treaty between them.

The parson of Stockton told me if ye would buy her a gown, her mother would give thereto a goodly fur; the gown needeth for to be had; and of colour it would be a goodly blue, or else a bright sanguine.

I pray you to buy for me two pipes[1] of gold. Your stews[2] do well. The Holy Trinity have you in governance.

Written at Paston[3] in haste the Wednesday next after "Deus qui errantibus;"[4] for default of a good secretary, &c.

Yours, AGNES PASTON.[5]

Paston, Wednesday, before 1440, 18 H. VI.

LETTER III. (II. vol. i. p. 5.)

This letter gives us an account of the ceremonies used at the time the Duke of Orleans was released, and of the Duke of Gloucester's absolute disapprobation of this measure. He had been taken prisoner at the famous battle of Agincourt, fought on Friday the 25th of October, 1415, 3 H. V. where he was found under a heap of dead bodies almost lifeless; and had continued a prisoner till this time (1 Nov. 1440, 19 H. VI.), a space of twenty-five years. Henry V. on his death-bed had ordered that he should not be released till a peace with France was concluded; and the Duke of Gloucester, [uncle of Henry VI. and protector] not only now protested against his enlargement, but had his protest recorded. This, however, availed nothing, for the Cardinal Bishop of Winchester, Henry Beaufort, and his party, prevailed. [The letter also notices two curious subjects; the arrival of the knight from Spain to fight for the honour of his mistress; and a most singular instance of legal trickery. Our ancestors seem to have had the ability of availing themselves of the forms of law to combat its spirit, to an extent which is not exceeded even by the lowest and most reckless attorney now. We may add here that, in the address of the letter, the style "right reverend" implies nothing clerical, but that the latter word was then commonly used in the present sense of revered.]

To my right reverend and right honourable master, John Paston, be this given.

SALVETE, &c. Tidings, the Duke of Orleans hath made his oath upon the sacrament, and used it, never for to bear arms against England, in the presence of the king and all the lords, except my Lord of Gloucester; and in proving [*as a proof that*] my said Lord of Gloucester agreed never to his deliverance, when the mass began he took his barge, &c.

God give grace the said Lord of Orleans be true, for this same week shall be towards France.

Also Frenchmen and Picards a great number came to Arfleet,[6] for to have rescued it; and our lords with their small puissance manly beat them, and put them to flight, and, blessed be our Lord, have taken the said city of Arfleet; the which is a great jewel to all England, and especially to our country.

Moreover there is one come into England, a knight out of Spain, with a kerchief[7] of pleasaunce enwrapped about his arm; the which knight will run a course with a sharp spear for his sovereign lady's sake, whom either Sir Richard Wodvile,[8] or Sir Christopher Talbot,[9] shall deliver, to the worship of England and of themselves by God's grace.

Farthermore ye be remembered, that an esquire of Suffolk, called John Lyston, recovered, in assize of novel disseisin, 700

1 Gold thread on pipes or rolls, for needle-work or embroidery, &c.

2 Ponds to keep fish alive for present use.

3 In Norfolk, in the hundred of Tunstead.

4 The words beginning the Collect on the third Sunday after Easter.

5 Agnes, daughter and coheir of Sir Edmond Barry, or Berry, of Harlingbury-hall in Hertfordshire, by Alice, daughter and heir of Sir Thomas Garbridge, knt., and wife of Sir William Paston, knt. She died in 1479, and was buried by her husband, in Our Lady's Chapel at the east end of Norwich Cathedral.

6 Harfleur in Normandy.

7 A scarf, or rich embroidered handkerchief, presented him by his sovereign lady, and which, in honour of her, he wore tied upon his arm; such ornaments were often worn by knights at their tilting matches.

8 Afterwards Earl Rivers, and father to Elizabeth, the Queen of Edward IV.—He was beheaded at Banbury, in 1469.

9 Third son of John, the famous Earl of Shrewsbury. He was slain in the battle of Northampton, in July, 1460, fighting for the House of Lancaster.

marks (466*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) in damages against Sir Robert Wingfield, &c. In avoiding of the payment of the said 700 marks, the said Sir Robert Wingfield[1] subtlely hath outlawed[2] the said John Lyston in Nottinghamshire, by the virtue of which outlawry all manner of chattel to the said John Lyston appertaining are accrued unto the king, &c. And anon *(as soon)* as the said outlawry was certified, my Lord Treasurer granted the said 700 marks to my Lord of Norfolk[3] for the arrears of his sowde[4] whilst he was in Scotland. And according to this assignment aforesaid, tallies *(were)* delivered, &c. And my Lord of Norfolk hath released the same 700 marks to Sir Robert Wingfield.

And here is great heaving and shoving by my Lord of Suffolk[5] and all his counsel for to espy how this matter came about, &c. Sir, I beseech *(you)* recommend me unto my mistress your mother, to my mistress your wife, and to my mistress your sister, et omnibus aliis quorum interest, &c.

Sir, I pray you, with all my heart, hold me excused that I write thus homely and briefly unto you, for truly convenable *(competent)* space sufficed me not.

No more, at this time, but the Trinity have you in protection, &c., and when your leisure is, resort again unto your college, the Inner Temple, for there be many which sore desire your presence, Welles and others, &c.

Written on the Feast of All Saints, between mass and matins calamo festinante, &c.

Yours, ROBERT REPPS.[6]

All-Saints-Day,
Tuesday, 1 Nov. 1440. 19 H. VI.

LETTER IV. (IV. vol. iii. p. 19.)

I can fix no certain date to this letter, either from the extraordinary account of the destruction of so great a number of Flemings, or from J. Paston's residence at Peter-house, in Cambridge, though by this it appears to have been written early in his life, and soon after his marriage, which took place before the year 1440. The words, too, "wt alle my sympyl herte," seem the expression of a young and unexperienced woman. The writing and spelling likewise vary from her usual manner; and her Christian name is differently written. [No notice of this descent of the Flemings is to be found in any of our historians, though Margaret Paston could scarcely be altogether deceived in an event occurring so near her, but it is probable the importance of it had been greatly exaggerated.]

To my worshipful husband, John Paston, abiding at Peterhouse, in Cambridge.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful husband, I recommend me to you with all my simple heart, and pray you to weet that there came up eleven hundred Flemings at Waxham,[7] thereof were taken and killed and drowchyn *(drowned)* eight hundred; and they had not have been, ye should have been at home this Whitsuntide, and I suppose that ye should be at home ereout [*ere it*] long be.

I thank you heartily for my letter, for I had none of you since I spake with you last of for the matter of John Maryot; the quest passed not off that day, for my Lord of Norfolk was in town for Wedyrby's matter, wherefore he would not let it pass off, for further of I kowe *(know, q.)* Fynch nor Bylbys maketh no purveyance for his good.

No more I write to you at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in keeping. Written at Norwich, on Trinity Sunday.

Your MARKARYTE PASTON.

Norwich, Trinity Sunday,
Date uncertain. After 1440. 19 H. VI.

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[1] The Wingfields were an ancient family seated at Wingfield Castle, and at Letheringham in Suffolk.

[2] Referring to this outlawry, on the back of the original letter, in an ancient hand, is written, "a lewde practise in those dayes."

[3] John Mowbray.

[4] [*Sowde*, pay—from the Norman *solde*, whence we have our term *soldier*, and the French and Germans their *soldat*.]

[5] William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk: he was afterwards Duke of Suffolk, and beheaded at sea, in 1450.

[6] The family of Repps flourished from the Conquest, for many centuries, at Repps, &c. in Norfolk.

[7] [Waxham in Norfolk, in the hundred of Happing.]

LETTER V.—(V. vol. iii. p. 21.)

This is a most affectionate letter, and cannot be read without emotion; it gives us an high opinion of the writer's tenderness towards her husband; her wish to have him at home, and under her tender care, "lever dan a new goune zow it were of scarlette" shows the artlessness of her regard, and impresses us with an idea of the purest simplicity. The letter was written after the birth of her son, and before the death of Sir William Paston, I have therefore fixed it to 1443.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, dwelling in the Inner Temple at London, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, thanking God of your amending of the great disease that ye have had, and I thank you for the letter that ye sent me, for by my troth my mother and I were nought in heart's ease from the time that we wist (*knew*) of your sickness, till we wist verily of your amending.

My mother behested (*vowed*) another image[1] of wax of the weight of you, to our Lady of Walsingham, and she sent four nobles (*li.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) to the four orders of friars at Norwich to pray for you, and I have behested to go on pilgrimage to Walsingham and to St. Leonard's[2] for you; by my troth I had never so heavy a season as I had from the time that I wist of your sickness, till I wist of your amending, and yet my heart is in no great ease, nor nought shall be, till I weet that ye be very whole. Your father[3] and mine was this day sev'night at Beccles, for a matter of the Prior of Bromholm, and he lay at Gelderstone that night, and was there till it was nine of the clock and the other day. And I sent thither for a gown, and my mother said that I should none have than till I had been there anon, and so they could none get.

My father Garneys,[4] sent me word that he should have been here the next week and my Emme also, and play them here with their hawks, and they should have me home with them; and so God help me, I shall excuse me of my going thither if I may, for I suppose that I shall readilier have tidings from you here than I should have there. I shall send my mother a token that she took (*brought to*) me, for I suppose that the time is come that I should send it her, if I keep the behest that I have made; I suppose I have told you what it was; I pray you heartily that (*ye*) will vouchsafe to send me a letter as hastily as ye may, if writing be none disease (*pain*) to you, and that ye will vouchsafe to send me word how your sore do. If I might have had my will, I should have seen you ere this time; I would ye were at home, if it were your ease, and your sore might be as well looked to here as it is there [*where*] ye be now, lever (*rather*) than a new gown though it were of scarlet. I pray you if your sore be whole, and so that ye may endure to ride when my father come to London, that he will ask leave and come home when the horse should be sent home again, for I hope ye shall be kept as tenderly here as ye be at London. I may none leisure have to do write half a quarter so much as I should say to you if I might speak with you. I shall send you another letter as hastily as I may. I thank you that ye would vouchsafe to remember my girdle, and that ye would write to me at the time, for I suppose that writing was none ease to you. Almighty

[1] This offering of an image of wax, of the weight of the person for whose good it was promised, is a curious circumstance. [See head of Letter xvi. for a notice of our Lady of Walsingham.]

[2] The Church of the priory of St. Leonard at Norwich, was famous at this time for the resort of pilgrims to the images of the Holy Virgin, the Holy Cross, and St. Anthony; but became afterwards much more famous by the visitation of pilgrims far and near, to the image of good King Henry VI., by whose miraculous effects great cures were supposed to have been performed.

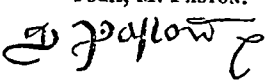
[3] Sir William Paston, the judge.

[4] This was probably her godfather, and Emme was very likely his daughter or niece, and Margaret Paston's friend [more probably *eme*—uncle, as used by Spenser.] The family of Garneys were at this time lords of Gelderstone.

God have you in his keeping, and send you health. Written at Oxnead, in right great haste, on St. Michael's even.

Yours, M. PASTON.

Oxnead, Saturday, 28th September, 1443. 22 H. VI.



My mother greet you well, and sendeth you God's blessing and hers; and she prayeth you, and I pray you also, that ye be well dieted of meat and drink, for that is the greatest help that ye may have now to your healthward. Your son [1] fareth well, blessed be God!

LETTER VI.—(VI. vol. iii. p. 27.)

From this letter we learn the time and place of holding the assizes in Sussex, one of the counties which now makes a part of the home circuit; and we likewise understand that the chief justice intended going by water to those places in Essex, Kent, and Surry, which lay along the river, no conveyance in any carriage being then thought of by him, though his illness was such as prevented his riding on horseback. John Hody was chief justice of the King's Bench from 1440 to 1462.

To my right worthy and worshipful Lord William Paston, justice, in haste.

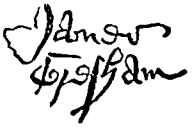
PLEASE it your good Lordship to weet, that the Chief Justice of the King's Bench recommendeth him to you, and is right sorry of the matter that is (*the*) cause of your none coming hither, but he will do all that he can or may for you. He hath had a sciatica that hath letted [*hindered*] him a great while to ride, and (*he*) dare not yet come on none horse's back, and therefore he hath spoken to the lords of the council, and informed them of your sickness and his also, that he may not ride at these next assizes to East Grinstead; and though those assizes discontinue pur noun venu dez Justicez,[2] he hopeth to be excused and ye also. And as for the remanent of the assizes he shall purvey to be there by water; and Almighty Jesu make you heyle (*healthy*) and strong.

Written right simply, the Wednesday next to fore the Feast of the Purification of our Lady, at London.

By your most simple servant,

JAMES GRESHAM.

London, Wednesday, 30th of January, 1443. 22 H. VI.



LETTER VII.—(VII. vol. iii. p. 29.)

[THIS letter is from John Gyney, probably father of Sir W. Jenney, a judge of the King's Bench in 1477, and contains an account of a dispute among some lawyers as to passing and signing some title deeds. It is written at North Walsham in Norfolk, in February, before 1443, and addressed to Sir W. Paston at Westminster. The letter concludes with the following paragraph:—"My said lady, your wife, prayeth you to be remembered of her green ginger of almonds for Lent, and of the leech (*physician*) of Orwell, for her sickness increaseth daily upon her, whereof she is sore afraid."]

LETTER VIII.—(III. vol. i. p. 11.)

[THIS is also a letter upon legal affairs, being from John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, to John Paston, appointing him, with W. Yelverton and W. Jenney, both subsequently judges of the King's Bench, to be arbitrators betwixt him and the heirs of Edmund Swathing.]

[1] This was probably Sir John Paston, born 1442.

[2] [Through the non-arrival of the justices.]

LETTER IX.—(IV. vol. i. p. 13.)

This Letter presents us with the effects of a private dispute, and gives us an instance of the dangerous though common ferocity of these unsettled times; it must have been written between 1440 and 1450, as in the former year Lord Beaumont was created a Viscount, and in the latter Sir Humphrey Stafford was killed. [It seems rather to be a street scuffle, "they fell in handes togyder," weapons were drawn, as in a contest they are almost certain to be when commonly worn; one was struck a "grette stroke on the hed," and the other endeavoured to stab. Of course the retainers, alike armed, could seldom refrain from joining in the quarrel, and of course also in their master's favour as here. When at a recent period private soldiers were suffered to wear their bayonets, we know similar events to that here narrated were too frequently the consequence.]

To my worshipful and reverend Lord John Viscount Beaumont.[1]

RIGHT worshipful, and my reverend and most special Lord, I recommend me unto your good grace in the most humble and lowly wise that I can or may, desiring to hear of your prosperity and welfare, as to my most singular joy and special comfort.

And if it please your Highness, as touching the sudden adventure that fell lately at Coventry, please it your Lordship to hear, that on Corpus Christi[2] even last passed, between eight and nine of the clock at afternoon, Sir Humphrey Stafford[3] had brought my master, Sir James of Ormond,[4] toward his inn from my Lady of Shrewsbury[5] and returned from him towards his inn, he met with Sir Robert Harcourt[6] coming from his mother's towards his inn, and passed Sir Humphrey; and Richard his son came somewhat behind, and when they met together they fell in hands together, and Sir Robert smote him a great stroke on the head with his sword, and Richard with his dagger hastily went toward him, and as he stumbled, one of Harcourt's men smote him in the back with a knife; men wot (*know*) not who it was readily; his father heard (*a*) noise and rode toward them, and his men ran before him thitherward; and in the going down off his horse, one, he wot not who, behind him, smote him on the head with an edged tool; men know not with us, with what weapon, that he fell down, and his son fell down before him as good as dead; and all this was done, as men say, in a Pater-noster while.[7]

And forthwith Sir Humphrey Stafford's men followed after, and slew two men of Harcourt's, one Swynerton and Bradshawe, and more be hurt, some be gone, and some be in prison in the jail at Coventry.

And before the coroner of Coventry, upon the sight of the bodies, there be indicted as principals for the death of Richard Stafford, Sir Robert Harcourt and the two men that be dead; and for the two men of Harcourt's that be dead, there be indicted two men of Sir Humphrey's as principals; and as yet there hath been nothing found before the justice of the peace of Coventry of this riot, because the sheriff of Warwickshire is dead, and they may not sit unto the time there be a new sheriff; and all this mischief fell because of an old debate that was between them for taking of a distress, as it is told.

And Almighty Jesu preserve your high estate, my special Lord, and send you long life and good health.

Written at Coventry on Tuesday next after Corpus Christi day, &c.

By your own poor servant,
JOHN NORTHWOOD.

Coventry,
Tuesday after Corpus Christi day,
between 1440 and 1450, 18 and 28 H. VI.

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[1] John Viscount Beaumont, so created in February, 1439-40, 18 H. VI., was the first of that title by patent in England; he was killed at the battle of Northampton, in July 1460, fighting for the House of Lancaster.

[2] The Thursday after Trinity Sunday.

[3] He was a collateral branch of the family of the Duke of Buckingham; and, in June 1450, commanded a detachment of the royal army sent out against the rebel Jack Cade: his party fell into an ambush, and he was killed.

[4] Query, whether James, son of the Earl of Ormond, who afterwards, in 1449, was created Earl of Wiltshire.

[5] Wife of John Talbot, the famous Earl of Shrewsbury.

[6] He signalised himself in the wars of Henry VI. and Edward IV., was a knight of the Garter; and, in November, 1470, 10 E. IV., was slain by the Staffords, perhaps in revenge for this murder of Richard Stafford.

[7] Proverbially, a short time; for our forefathers, who were to repeat a great number of Pater-nosters at once, performed the business very expeditiously.

LETTER X.—(VIII. vol. iii. p. 33.)

[Rights of way, trespasses, and claims of unknown rights, seem to have formed as large a share of the vexations of a landed proprietor at that time as at present. These, with threats of going to law, and providing for repairs, form the subjects of the present letter.]

To Edmund Paston, of Clifford's Inn, in London, be this letter taken.

To mine well-beloved son, I greet you well, and advise you to think once of the day of your father's counsel to learn the law, for he said many times that whosoever should dwell at Paston, should have need to con (*to know how*) defend himself.

The vicar of Paston[1] and your father,[2] in Lent last was, were thorough and accorded, and doles [*boundaries*] set how broad the way should be, and now he hath pulled up the doles, and saith he will make a ditch from the corner of his wall, right over the way to the new ditch of the great close. And there is a man in Trunch hight *(called)* Palmer too, that had of your father certain lands in Trunch over seven years or eight years agone, for corn, and truly hath paid all the years; and now he hath suffered the corn to be withset *(taken)* for eight shillings of rent to Gimmingham, which your father paid never. Geoffry asked Palmer why the rent was not asked in mine husband's time, and Palmer said, for *(because)* he was a great man, and a wise man of the law, and that was the cause men would not ask him the rent.

I send you the names of the men, that cast down the pits, that was *(in)* Genney's Close, written in a bill closed in this letter.

I send you not this letter to make you weary of Paston, for I live in hope, and ye will learn that they shall be made weary of their work, for in good faith I dare well say it was your father's last will to have done right well to that place, and that can I show of good proof, though men would say nay. God make you right a good man, and send God's blessing and mine. Written in haste at Norwich, the Thursday after Candlemas-day.

Weet of your brother John how many joists will serve the parlour and the chapel at Paston, and what length they must be, and what breadth and thickness they must be, for your father's will was, as I ween verily, that they should be nine inches one way, and seven another way, and purvey therefore that they may be squared there, and sent hither, for here can none such be had in this country; and say to your brother John it were well done to think on Stansted Church;[3] and I pray you to send me tidings from beyond sea,[4] for here they are afraid to tell such as be reported

By your mother, AGNES PASTON.

Norwich,
Thursday, 4th of February,
1444-5, 23 H. VI.

LETTER XI.—(IX. vol. iii. p. 37.)

The manor of Oxnead had been in the Hauteyn family for many generations, and was sold by some of that family upon a bad title: it was afterwards purchased by Sir William Paston, on whose death, in 1444, John Hauteyn, clerk (having been licensed by the pope to leave his religious order and become secular,) set up his claim and recovered his inheritance; but, about 1449, he with others released his right to Agnes Paston.

To the most reverend Father in God, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Chancellor of England.[5]

BESEECHETH meekly your gracious Lordship, your own servant and orator John Hauteyn, chaplain, that where *(as)*[6] he hath divers suit, and actions-in-law to be sued against Agnes

[1] John Partrick, of Swathfield, was vicar of Paston from 1442 to 1447.

[2] Sir William Paston, knight, died 13th of August, 1444, aged 66.

[3] Stansted Church in Suffolk:—Dame Agnes had possessions in that parish.

[4] These tidings relate to our foreign transactions, the giving up of Maine, truces, &c. &c., on the king's marriage, which had taken place in November.

[5] John Stafford, Archbishop of Canterbury, and a cardinal, was Lord Chancellor from 1443 to 1447.

[6] [The words *where* and *whereas* were used at this period indiscriminately the one for the other. This usage continued so late as the time of Shakspere, in whose plays we find numerous instances.]

that was the wife of William Paston, of the manor of Oxnead, in the county of Norfolk; and forasmuch as your said beseecher can get no counsel of men of court to be with him in the said matters, because that the said W. Paston was one of the king's justices, and John Paston son and heir to the said W. Paston is also a man of court,[1] that it please your good Lordship to assign, and most strictly to command John Heydon,[2] Thomas Lyttylton[3] and John Olston to be of counsel with your said beseecher in the said matters, and other that he hath to do against the said Agnes and other, and your said beseecher shall content them well for their labour, and that this be done in the reverence of God, and way of charity.

JOHN HAUTEYN, *Chaplain*.

About 1445.

LETTER XII.—(X. vol. iii. p. 39.)

[Is from Sir Roger Chamberleyn, of Gedding, Suffolk, dated the 15th of September after 1444, to Agnes Paston, informing her upon what conditions Sir William Paston had sold the "Manor called Walsham, in Walsham."]

LETTER XIII.—(XI. vol. iii. p. 41.)

This letter I should suppose was written not long after Sir William Paston's death in 1444, as it refers to the blessing which she asked of him to bestow upon his children, probably immediately after some sickness or misfortune which had befallen her son. The style of it is that of a most affectionate mother, and the introduction of his father's saying is a masterly stroke. Her own reflections are judicious, apposite, and well timed, and the whole of the discourse would do honour to a parent at this day, when our thoughts, manners, and language are so much more refined than they were during the age in which this was written.

To my well-beloved son, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

SON, I greet you well, and let you weet, that forasmuch as your brother Clement letteth me weet that ye desire faithfully my blessing; that blessing that I prayed your father to give you the last day that ever he spake, and the blessing of all saints under heaven, and mine mote [*might*[4]] come to you all days and times; and think verily none other but that ye have it, and shall have it, with that (*on condition*) that I find you kind and willing to the weal of your father's soul, and to the welfare of your brethren.

By my counsel, dispose yourself as much as ye may to have less to do in the world: your father said, "In little business lyeth much rest." This world is but a thoroughfare, and full of woe; and when we depart therefrom, right nought bear with us but our good deeds and ill; and there knoweth no man how soon God will clepe (*call*) him; and therefore it is good for every creature to be ready. Whom God visiteth, him he loveth.

And as for your brethren they will I know certainly labour all that in them lyeth for you. Our Lord have you in his blessed keeping, body and soul. Written at Norwich, the 29th day of October. By your mother,

AGNES PASTON.

Norwich, 29th of October, about or after 1444.

LETTER XIV.—(XII. vol. iii. p. 43.)

This letter is written in an easy yet respectful style, and the thanks of the writer are hinted in the most delicate manner, for the "rightful favours" conferred upon him. Sir William Yelverton was appointed a judge of the King's Bench, in 1444, 23 H. VI. and was continued in that high office by Edward IV.

To Stephen Scroope.[5]

WORSHIPFUL and my right well beloved son, I commend me to you, and heartily thank you for your good advertisements, and right well advised letters to me sent from time to

[1] This backwardness of the lawyers to be concerned against the widow of the late judge shows a particular degree of respect to his memory, and to the character of his son, then a lawyer.

[2] A lawyer, and recorder of Norwich.

[3] Afterwards the famous Judge Lyttelton.

[4] Fenn translates—*must*.

[5] At the bottom, in a hand more modern than that of the letter, is written, "This Stephen Scroope was sonne to Dame Millicent, late wife to Sir J. Fastolf,

time, and so pray you of your good continuance.

Please it you to weet, that forasmuch as the parson Sir Thomas Howys cometh up at this time by the grievous pursuit of John Andrews and Heydon to appear before the right worshipful Sir, my right well-beloved brother, your father, and other the king's judges of the King's Bench; I pray you heartily that ye will have in remembrance for to recommend me to him, when ye speak with him, and for to thank him for his rightful favour showed in Sir Thomas's matter, and in all other matters that toucheth me, which be attained in that high court; and so it like you pray him of his good continuance, and I shall do serve it unto him (*recompense him*) to my simple power for his good will to me showed, and to mine, and I trust to God that he shall hold him pleased; and that it like you to give credence to the said Sir Thomas of that he shall say to you for my worship and profit, and that this letter may recommend me to my daughter your wife; beseeching the Blessed Trinity to send you the accomplishment of your good desire.

Written at Caister, the 30th day of October.

JOHN FASTOLF.

Caister, 30th of October,
between 1444 and 1454. 23 and 33 H. VI.

LETTER XV.—(V. vol. i. p. 17.)

This letter has no date of the year, but it must have been written after 1444, 23 H. VI., in which year the Earl of Stafford was created Duke of Buckingham, and most probably before the breaking out of the civil war, as the duke makes no complaint of the distresses of the times, but only mentions that season of the year as not so convenient for him to procure money. The sentiments contained in the letter are those of a just man, and a man of honour, wishing to discharge his debt at the time appointed, and which, as he could not do in money, he performs by sending an obligation which he had from another, upon which Lord Beaumont might receive his demand. The direction and address of those letters, which are written from one Knight of the Garter to another, show us that in this age they esteemed one another as friends and brethren united by that most noble order, whose institution directs that the knights-companions should be "fellows and brethren united in all chances of fortune, co-partners both in peace and war, assistant to one another in all serious and dangerous transactions, and through the whole course of their lives faithful and friendly one towards another." The letter itself is written by the duke's secretary, but the conclusion and signature are by his own hand, and it is most probably the only original letter extant of this great peer.

To the right worshipful, and with all mine heart right entirely beloved brother, the Viscount Beaumont.[1]

RIGHT worshipful, and with all mine heart right entirely beloved brother, I recommend me to you, thanking right heartily your good brotherhood for your good and gentle letters, the which it hath liked you to send unto me now late; and like it you to know, I perceive, by the tenor of the said letter, your good desire of certain debt that I owe unto you.

In good faith, brother, it is so with me at this time that I have but easy stuff of money within me, for so much as the season of the year is not yet grown, so that I may not please your said good brotherhood, as God knoweth my will and intent were to do and (*if*) I had it.

Nevertheless and (*if*) it like you, I send you by my son Stafford an obligation, whereof of late time I have received part of the debt therein comprised; the residue of which I pray you to receive by the said obligation, and that I may have an acquittance thereof, and to give credence unto my said son in such thing as he shall say unto your good brotherhood on my behalf.

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and, as seemeth by this lrē, maryed the daughter of Justice Yelverton, whereby the said Sir John called hym brother." It appears from a letter of William Paston, to his brother John Paston, dated 6th of September 1454, that Scroope was then either a bachelor or widower, a marriage being in contemplation at that time between him and their sister Elizabeth. From the expressions there used, I am apt to believe he was then a widower. If so, this letter was written before that year.

1 [See a notice of Viscount Beaumont in a note on letter ix. page 6.]

Right worshipful, and with all mine heart right entirely beloved brother, I beseech the Blessed Trinity preserve you in honour and prosperity.

Written at my Castle of Makestock, the 17th day of March.

Your true and faithful brother,

H. BUCKINGHAM.[1]

Makestock Castle, in Warwickshire,
17th March,
between 1444 and 1455; 23 and 3 H. VI.

LETTER XVI.—(VI. vol. i. p. 21.)

The image of Our Lady of Walsingham, in Norfolk, was in these days, and had been for ages, particularly resorted to by all ranks of people, from the king to the peasant, by foreigners as well as natives; and was held in the highest veneration for the various miracles, &c., ascribed to her. We must not therefore wonder in this enlightened age that a judge, bigotted to his religion and the credulity of the times, should ascribe not only every fortunate event which befel him to the influence of Our Lady of Walsingham, but likewise attribute his escape from every danger which had threatened him to her protection. This famous and wonder-working image was, however, in 1538, 30 H. VIII., brought to Chelsea, and there burnt.

To my right worshipful cousin, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful cousin, I recommend me to you, thanking you as heartily as I can for myself, &c., and especially for that ye do so much for Our Lady's House of Walsingham, which I trust verily ye do the rather for the great love that ye deem I have thereto; for truly if I be drawn to any worship or welfare, and discharge of mine enemies' danger, I ascribe it unto Our Lady.

Praying you therefore that ye will be as friendly to Our Lady's House as I wote (*know*) well ye have alway been, and in especial now, that I might have of you the report certainly by your letter of that that Naunton your cousin informed you and told you by mouth of all matters touching Our Lady's House of Walsingham; for methinketh by that I have heard by Our Lady's priest of Walsingham, if I understood well that matter, that it should be much to the good speed of the matter, and doubt you not Our Lady shall quite (*requite*) it you, and her poor prior hereafter as he may, &c.

Praying you also, cousin, and advising for the ease of us both, and of our friends, and of many other, that ye be at London by times this term, and if we speed well now, all well all this year after; for I know verily there was never made a greater labour than shall be made now, and therefore I pray to Our Lady, help us, and her Blessed Son, which have you in his holy keeping.

Written at your poor place of Bayfield, on St. Francis's day, in haste.

Your cousin,

WILLIAM YELVERTON, *Justice*.[2]

Bayfield, in Norfolk,
St. Francis's Day, 4th October,
between 1444 and 1460.

[1] Humphrey Stafford, Earl of Stafford, &c., was created Duke of Buckingham in 1444, 23 H. VI. His mother was the Lady Anne, only daughter of Thomas of Woodstock, youngest son to Edward III. He was firm in the interest of his sovereign, and lost his life in the battle of Northampton, in July 1460, where he jointly commanded with the Duke of Somerset. His son Stafford, mentioned in this letter, was most probably Humphrey Earl of Stafford, who was wounded at the first battle of St. Albans, in 1455, and of which wounds he soon after died; if so, it undoubtedly ascertains the date of this letter to some period between 1444 and 1455. The signature is remarkable for having the initial B of the title included within the initial H of the Christian name.

[2] In 1440 William Yelverton, son of John Yelverton, by Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Read, and widow of Robert Clere, was appointed King's Serjeant, and in 1444 a Justice of the King's Bench, and in 1460 he was created a Knight of the Bath. This letter, therefore, was most probably written before 1460, as had it been written after that time, he would have signed himself knight as well as justice.

LETTER XVII.—(XIII. vol. iii. p. 45.)

I have given this letter as a specimen of disputes which frequently arise at present, as well as in former times, when either encroachments are really made by the principal person in a parish, or when any act is done which appears such to some self-important little owner. Which party was right in this matter is at this distance of time very immaterial; it only shows human nature to have been the same yesterday and to-day. [It is interesting also, as showing the practical freedom of the people, where the yeomen could so openly and sturdily contend against their superiors in rank and wealth, and also the general rectitude and fairness of the law-courts; for if there had been any fear of indirect influence, they would not have so readily appealed to them. England appears even at this time to have been the country—

"Where even the meanest peasant studies law,
And keeps thereby the magistrates in awe,"

as has been well said by Defoe in his 'Trueborn Englishman,' which couplet, by the way, is the original of Goldsmith's more elegant but feebler one in the 'Traveller,'

"Where even the peasant boasts his rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man."]

To John Paston, dwelling in the Temple at London, be this letter delivered in haste.

I GREET you well; and let you weet, that, on the Sunday before St. Edmond, after even song, Agnes Ball come to me to my closet and bade me good even, and Clement Spicer with her; and I asked him what he would; and he asked me why I had stopped in the king's way; and I said to him I stopped no way but mine own, and asked him why he had sold my land to John Ball, and he swore he was never accorded with your father; and I told him if his father had done as he did, he would have been ashamed to have said as he said; and all that time Waryn Herman leaned over the park close and listened what we said; and said that the change was a rewly *(grievous)* change, for the town was undo *(undone)* thereby, and is the worse by an 100*l.* And I told him it was no courtesy to meddle him in a matter but if *(unless)* he were called to council; and proudly going forth with me in the church, he said the stopping of the way should cost me twenty nobles (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) and yet it should down again. And I let him weet, he that put it down should pay therefore.

Also he said that it was well done that I set men to work to owl[1] many while I was here, but in the end I shall lose my cost. Then he asked me why I had away his hay at Walsham, saying to me he would he had wist it, when it was carried, and he should a letted *(have hindered)* it; and I told him it was mine own ground, and for mine own I would hold it; and he bade me take four acres and go no farther; and thus churtly[2] (*churlishly q. ?*) he departed from me in the churchyard; and since I spake with a certain man, and asked him if he heard ought say why the dinner was made at Norfolk's house, and he told me (*he*) heard say that certain men had sent to London to get a commission out of the Chancery to put down again the wall and the dyke. I received your letter by Robert Repps this day, after this letter *(was)* written thus far: I have read it, but I can give you none answer more than I have written, save the wife of Harman hath the name of our Lady,[3] whose blessing ye have and mine. Written at Paston, on the day after St. Edmond. By your mother,

AGNES PASTON.

Paston, 17th November,
after 1444. 23 H. VI.

[1] To owl may signify to deceive, as an owler is a person who carries contraband goods in the night; though I rather think it means in this place to oil, that is, to smooth to her purpose, but q.? [Fenn, there is little doubt, is right in supposing that "to owl" is here intended to signify "to deceive," but we know of no other instance of such use of the word: in the instance given the term *owler* is applied to the contrabandist in reference to his night employment, and not to his deceit. It cannot either, we think, mean "to oil."]

[2] [Churtley is *curtly*, a good old English word, meaning shortly, sharply, angrily.]

[3] [*i.e.* her name was Mary.]

LETTER XVIII.—(XIV. vol. iii. p. 49.)

This letter contains a curious fact. It appears by it that the sheriff's officers had arrested a person in the church during mass, and that the priest and some of the congregation had rescued him, for which a suit was commenced against them. This shows the power of the sheriff at this time, when even a church, during the time of divine service, could not protect a person against whom his process had been issued. A murderer or robber might have claimed sanctuary, but a poor debtor seems to have had no such privilege. [We do not see how the fact is ascertained by Fenn that the arrest was for debt only. At that time the sheriff and his officers could arrest in criminal as well as in civil processes.]

To my right reverend mistress, Agnes Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful mistress, I recommend me unto you, thanking you of the great cheer that ye made me the last time that I was with you; mistress, in all your goods and occupations that lyeth in my simple power to do in word, will, and deed, I have do *(done)* my diligence and my power thereto, so I be saved before God; and have owen to your person right hearty love, for the which I am right ill acquit *(requited)* and *(if)* it be as I understand it, for it is do *(done)* me to weet that I am sued, with more of my parishioners, for a rescue making upon the officers of the sheriff; and I take God to record that it is wrongfully do *(done)* unto us. And the great fray that they made in the time of mass it ravished my wits and made me full heavily disposed; I pray Jesu give them grace to repent them thereof, that they that caused it may stand out of peril of soul.

Mistress, at the reverence of God, and as ever I may do service that may be pleasing unto you, send me justly word, by the bringer of this bill, how ye will that I be guided; for it is told me that, if I be taken, I may no other remedy havyn *(have)* but straight to prison; for the which I have sold away 20*s.* worth of stuff, and the residue of my stuff I have put it in sure hand, for truly I will not abide the jeopardy of the swth *(suit)* I have levir *(had rather)* to go as far as my feet may bear me; nevertheless as ye command me to do, so it be not to my great hurt, I will fulfil it. No more to you at this time, but God send you that grace that ye may come to his bliss. Written at Bromholm, in great haste.

By your
SIR ROBERT WILLIAMSON.

No certain date.
After 1444. 23 H. VI.

LETTER XIX.—(XV. vol. iii. p. 51.)

The date of this letter cannot be ascertained, though it must have been written after 1444, when William Yelverton was appointed a judge of the King's Bench. He seems to fear a party, in opposition to him, in Norfolk, would injure him with the king and lords, and therefore wishes for Sir John Fastolf's interference to prevent it. The judge's mother was widow to Robert Clere, and by that means he was half-brother to Edmund Clere, of Stokesby. [This Sir John Fastolf, it has been asserted, was the original of Shakspere's inimitable Sir John Falstaff. This letter, however, shows a curious contrariety to the dramatic situation of the parties, for here we have the judge suing to the knight and thanking him for his "gentleness and kindness." See a further notice of Fastolf in a subsequent letter.]

A letter to Sir John Fastolf, from Justice Yelverton.[1]

MY most worshipful and best betrusted master, I recommend me to you, thanking you for many great gentleness and kindness that ye have showed unto me; and for the great ease that I had of your man and your horses also.

As for tidings out of this country, here is a marvellous disposed country, and many evil-willed people to Sir Thomas Todenham and Heydon, and but if they be put in comfort[2] there by the mean of a good sheriff and under-sheriff, they may have remedy now by the order of law, and else great inconveniences are like for to follow thereof; therefore, Sir, for the weal of all our good country, move the king, my Lord Chancellor, and all other lords, as ye think best for this matter on this behalf. Also,

[1] This is written on the back of the letter, which has no direction, in an ancient hand.

[2] [Fenn gives, in error—*consort*.]

Sir, if they noise me by the mean of my Lord Scales, or by any other mean, or by any bill sued by Brygg, or by any other man by their craft, that it please you to say for me in salvation of my poor worship, which I wot well they may not hurt but *(unless)* they do me wrongs to the king, my Lord Chancellor, my Lord of Winchester, my Lord Cromwell, and in other places as ye seemeth, that no credence be given to mine hurt in mine absence. Also, Sir, that William Jenney and Brayn, *(q. Bryan?)* the clerks of the sessions, be hasted hitherward as well as they may; and, Sir, my cousin Paston and my brother Clere can tell you much more thing that I should write of to you and *(if)* I had leisure, but I shall within short time send you more tidings out of this country, by the grace of God, which have you in his holy keeping.

By your old servant,
WILLIAM YELVERTON, *Justice.*

LETTER XX.—(XVI. vol. iii. p. 55.)

[This letter, without containing any circumstance of great importance, is so complete a detail of the events of common life, told in language of such simple truthfulness, so indicative of the secret though perhaps unconscious workings of the mind, as to be extremely interesting. The lawyer it appears had searched, not into the justice of Lady Morley's claim, but to have found writings thereof; but "could none find in none wise;" and Margaret herself had induced a witness or mediator to promise that "he will hold rather with you than with her."]

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare; praying you to weet that I was with my Lady Morley [1] on the Saturday next after that ye departed from hence, and told her what answer that ye had of John Butt, and she took it right strangely, and said that she had told you and showed you enough, whereby ye might have knowledge that the relief ought to be paid to her; and she said she wist well that ye delay it forth that she should not have that longeth *(belongeth)* to her right; and she told me how it was paid in Thomas Chambers' time, when her daughter Hastings was wedded; and she said since that ye will make none end with her, she will sue therefore as law will.

I conceived by her that she had counsel to labour against you therein within right short time, and then I prayed her that she would vouchsafe not to labour against you in this matter till ye came home, and she said nay by her faith, she would no more days give you therein; she said she had set you so many days to accord with her, and ye had broke them, that she was right weary thereof; and she said she was but a woman, she must do by her counsel, and *(as)* her counsel had advised her, so she said she will do; then I prayed her again that she would tarry till ye came home, and I said I trusted verily that ye would do when ye came home as it longeth to you to do, and if ye might have very knowledge that she ought of right for to have it, I said I wist well that ye would pay it with right good will; and told her that ye had searched to have found writing thereof, and ye could none find in none wise; and she said she wist well there was writing thereof enough, and she hath writing thereof, how Sir Robert of Mauteby, and Sir John, and my grandsire, and divers other of my ancestors paid it, and said never nay thereto; and in no wise I could not get no grant of her to cease till ye came home; and she bade me that I should do an errand to my mother, and when I came home I did mine errand to her, and she asked me if I had spoken to my lady of this foresaid matter, and I told her how I had done, and what answer I had; and she said she should go to my Lady Morley's on the next day, and she should speak to her thereof, and essay to get grant of her to cease of the foresaid

[1] Lady Morley was the daughter of a Lord Spencer or Despencer, and had to her first husband Sir Hugh Hastyngs, of Elsing, in Norfolk; after his decease, she married Thomas Lord Morley, and was now his widow, and must have been considerably advanced in age. She seems to have had right on her side, as the Mauteby estate in Sparham had been granted away by the family of Hastyngs, and most probably under a reserved rent or relief.

matter till that ye come home; and truly my mother did her devour [*duty*—the French *devoir*] right faithfully therein, as my cousin Clere shall tell you when that he speak with you; and she got grant of my said lady that there should nought be done gainst you therein, and *(if)* ye would accord with her, and do as ye ought to do, betwixt this time and Trinity Sunday.

Laurence Reed of Mauteby recommendeth him to you, and prayeth you that ye will vouchsafe to let him buy of you the farm barley that ye should have of him, and if ye will let him have it to a reasonable price, he will have it with right good will, and he prayeth you if ye will that he have it, that ye will vouchsafe to send him word at what price he should have the comb as hastily as ye may, and else he must be purveyed in other place.

As touching other tidings, I suppose John of Damme shall send you word in a letter, as it is told me verily Heydon shall not come at London this term.

It is said in this country that Daniel[1] is out of the king's good grace, and he shall down and all his men, and all that be his well willers; there shall no man be so hardy to do neither say against my Lord of Suffolk,[2] nor none that longeth to him, and all that have done and said against him they shall sore repent them. Katharine Walsham shall be wedded on the Monday next after Trinity Sunday, as it is told me, to the gallant with the great chain;[3] and there is purveyed for her much good array of gowns, girdles, and attires, and much other good array, and he hath purchased a great purchase of five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) by the year to give her to her jointure.

I am afraid that John of Sparham[4] is so schyttyl *(light)* witted, that he will set his goods to mortgage to Heydon, or to some other of your good friends, but if *(unless)* I can hold him in the better, ere ye come home; he hath been arrested since that ye went; and hath had much sorrow at the suit of Master John Stokes of London for ten marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) that Sparham owed to him; and in good faith he hath had so much sorrow and heaviness that he wist not what he might do. I feel him so disposed that he would have sold and have set to mortgage all that he hath, he had not rowth *(cared)* to whom, so that he might have had money to have holpen himself with; and I entreated him so that I suppose he will neither sell nor set to mortgage, neither cattle nor other goods of his, till he speak with you; he supposeth that all that is done to him is at the request of the parson of Sparham and Knatysale. I suppose it is alms *(charity)* to comfort him, for in good faith he is right heavy, and his wife also; he is not now under arrest, he hath paid his fees, and goeth at large; he was arrested at Sparham, of one of Knatysale's men.

Hodge Feke told me that Sym Shepherd is still with Wylly, and if ye will I shall purvey that he shall be brought home ere ye come home. It is told me that he that kept your sheep was outlawed [on Monday at the suit of Sir Thomas Todenham, and if it be so ye are not like to keep him long. And as touching that that ye bade me speak for to Bacton, he saith he is well advised that she said she would never have to do with all, nor he cannot pick that she hath none right to have it, and he will say like as he hath heard her say, and if she speak to him thereof he will rather hold with you than with her. I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to send me word how ye speed in your matter touching Gresham, and how Daniel is in grace. Harry Goneld hath brought to me 40*s.* of Gresham since ye

[1] [It does not appear who this Daniel, afterwards called Lord Daniel, was. During Jack Cade's rebellion, a bill of indictment was found, among several others, against Thomas Daniel, but that was as a friend and adherent of Suffolk. He may, however, have been the Thomas Daniel, constable of Castle Rising, who married a sister of John Howard, afterwards Duke of Norfolk, mentioned in Letter cxxxix.]

[2] At this time William de la Pole, Marquess of Suffolk, received the greatest marks of favour from the queen, and was very soon after the writing of this letter created Duke of Suffolk.

[3] It appears that chains of gold were at this time worn as ornaments of dress, and that this gallant out did his contemporaries in the size of his.

[4] The Sparhams were an ancient family, residing at Sparham, in Norfolk: this was the last male of that branch, and seems with himself to have finished his estate, &c.

went, and he saith I shall have more ere Whitsuntide if he may pick it up.

I suppose James Gresham have told you of other things that I have sped since ye went hence. If I hear any strange tidings in this country I shall send you word. I pray you that I may be recommended to my Lord Daniel.

The Holy Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you health and good speed in all your matters touching your right. Written at Norwich, on the Wednesday next after that ye parted hence.

Yours, MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich,
Wednesday, April, 1448.
26 H. VI.

LETTER XXI.—(VII. vol. i. p. 25.)

[THIS letter is from James Gresham to "mine especial master, John Paston, Esquire," conjectured to have been written on the 18th Oct. 1449. It relates the progress of some obscure lawsuits, and announces some political changes, but nothing of any peculiar interest, unless it be the following:—"On Monday last past was a great affray at Coventry, between the Duke of Somerset's men and the watchmen of the town, and two or three men of the town were killed there, to *(the)* great disturbance of all the lords there, for the larum bell was rung, and the town arose, and would have jeoparded *(hazarded)* to have distressed the Duke of Somerset, &c. had not the Duke of Buckingham taken a direction therein.]

LETTER XXII.—(XVII. vol. iii. p. 63.)

[THIS is an authentic copy of the articles of impeachment exhibited against the Duke of Suffolk, taken at the time, and the purport of them may be found in several of our histories of that period.] These articles were exhibited in the beginning of February, 1449-50, when the duke was committed to the Tower, where his confinement was but short; as, upon the adjournment of the parliament to meet at Leicester in April, he then appeared there in his usual post as prime minister. I cannot help taking notice of the words of the last sentence of the first charge, "Wheruppon the same Duke of Suff sith ye tyme of heis areste hath do *(that is, hath caused)* the seid Margarete to be married to heis seid sonne." From these words it plainly appears that the duke immediately upon his arrest caused the marriage between his son and the Lady Margaret to be solemnised. I do not find that any of our historians mention this as a matter which actually took effect, but only as a matter which the duke had in contemplation, the lady at this time being only eight or nine years old. Moreover, had this marriage been then really solemnised, it must have affected not only the legitimacy of the duke's children, but also the legitimacy of the Lady Margaret's son, Henry VII., as John Duke of Suffolk (the person here mentioned as her husband) lived till 1491; and she married Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond, and by him had her son Henry (afterwards Henry VII.), about 1455. The renowned Lady Margaret here mentioned was the only daughter and heir of John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, grandson of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. She married Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond, by whom she was the mother of our King Henry VII. After the decease of this earl, she was successively the wife of Henry Stafford younger son of Humphrey Duke of Buckingham, and Thomas Stanley, Earl of Derby; after which last marriage she engaged herself in a vow of celibacy, and spent her time in prayer, almsgiving, and founding colleges. She died in 1509, when about seventy years old.

LETTER XXIII.—(VIII. vol. i. p. 29.)

Articles of impeachment were exhibited by the Commons in parliament against the Duke of Suffolk in February, 1449; and the king, to appease them, committed the Duke to the Tower: his enlargement from thence, &c. is here related; and it seems by what is here mentioned, that he appeared abroad usually with a guard. [The fact of the insecurity of Yarmouth and the coast of Norfolk is historically curious, and is strongly indicative of the disturbed state of the times. Mr. Fenn, we think, is slightly mistaken as to the Duke of Suffolk's guard; "his men again waiting upon him," is merely the numerous train common at that time with the great nobility. It is true they were frequently armed, and the reader will probably call to mind the conflicts between the retainers of the Duke of Gloster and the Bishop of Winchester, described by Shakspere in this very reign; but they were not guards.]

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, &c. *(then follows some common business about his farms and tenants.)*

William Rutt, the which is with Sir John Heveningham,[1] came home from London yesterday, and he said plainly to his master, and to many other folks, that the Duke of Suffolk is pardoned, and hath his men again waiting upon him, and is right well and at ease and merry, and is in the king's good grace, and in the good conceit of all the lords, as well as ever he was.

There have been many enemies against Yarmouth and Cromer, and have done much harm, and taken many Englishmen, and put them in great distress, and greatly *(heavily)* ransomed them; and the said enemies have been so bold that they come up to the land, and play them on Caister Sands and in other places, as homely as [*as much at home*[2] *as if*] they were Englishmen; folks be right sore afraid that they will do much harm this summer, but if *(unless)* there be made right great purveyance against them.

Other tidings know I none at this time; the blissful Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written at Norwich on Saint Gregory's day.

Yours, M. PASTON.

Norwich,
St. Gregory's Day,
Thursday, 12th of March,
1449. 28 H. VI.

LETTER XXIV.—(XVIII. vol. iii. p. 81.)

[THIS letter is from Robert the prior of Bromholm, "to my sovereyn John Paston," written about March, 1449-50, requesting him "as I am your true beadsman as *(to)* labour for me here that I might have a writ of passage directed unto such men as you think that should best give me my charge." He adds, "Some counsel me to have a letter of exchange, though it were but of forty shillings or less, but I commit all my best *(behest q ?)*[3] in this matter to your wisdom, and whatever ye pay in this matter, I shall truly at our meeting repay again to you." The prior was going to a bishop, but it is not said where, or upon what business.]

LETTER XXV.—(XIX. vol. iii. p. 85.)

I have given this letter as mentioning a tenure by petit sergeanty; these tenures were abolished by a statute, in the reign of Charles II., but the honorary services by grand sergeanty are still continued.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, praying you to weet that the parson of Oxnead told me that Wyndham told him that Swainsthorp is held of the king by the third part or the fourth part of a knight's fee, and whosoever had the manor of Swainsthorp

[1] The family of Heveningham had large possessions in Norfolk, and was a family of consequence in that county for many descents.

[2] [Fenn reads, "as much at their ease as if."]

[3] [Behest is order or appoint. We rather think "all my best" means all for my best.]

he should find an armed man in time of war in the castle of Norwich forty days to his own cost, and that ye should pay 30s. to the king yearly out of the said manor; and it is found also that your father should have died seised, and that ye should have entered therein as heir after your father's decease, and that ye should be now upon the age of thirty winters.

The Trinity have you in his keeping; written at Norwich, the Friday next afore Saint George.

Yours,
M. PASTON.

Norwich,
Friday, April,
about 1450, 28 H. VI.

LETTER XXVI.—(IX. vol. i. p. 33.)

This affectionate letter, strongly inculcating his son's duty to God, his sovereign, and his parents, gives him good and fatherly counsel, as to his company, his conversation, and transactions in life; tells him, that in following the advice it contains, he will prosper in the world; and then, solemnly pronouncing a blessing on him, it concludes with a prayer for him and his posterity. May not this well-written epistle alone entitle this duke to a place amongst the noble authors of England? This advice, written so immediately upon his departure, and so short a time before his murder, must have made a deep impression on his son's mind; and doubtless in that age the letter was much admired, as even at this period of refined literature, it may be called a good and an affecting composition. [The Duke of Suffolk appears here in an entirely new character. History represents him, on very sufficient grounds, as ambitious, proud, revengeful, greedy, unfaithful alike to his king and to his country when his own interests could be served by the sacrifice of either. Hume (Hist. of Eng. chap. xx. xxi.) and the Pictorial History of England (vol. ii. p. 83, *et seq.*) display the real character of the man in his actions, and Shakspere, in his Henry VI. Part ii., has vividly and no doubt correctly stated the popular opinion of the time as to his conduct. The captain who seizes him at sea, and, quibbling on his name, tells him, he is the pool or puddle—

"Whose filth and dirt,
Troubles the silver spring where England drinks,"

adds also that—

"By devilish policy art thou grown great,
And, like ambitious Sylla, over gorg'd
With gobbets of thy mother's bleeding heart."

Probably, however, the Duke added hypocrisy to his other vices, and a staid and apparently devout demeanor may have been adopted by the favourite of the weak but pious Henry.]

The Copy of a notable letter, written by the Duke of Suffolk[1] *to his Son,*[2] *giving him therein very good counsel.*

My dear and only well-beloved son, I beseech our Lord in Heaven, the Maker of all the World, to bless you, and to send you ever grace to love him, and to dread him, to the which, as far as a father may charge his child, I both charge you, and pray you to set all your spirits and wits to do, and to know his holy laws and commandments, by the which ye shall, with his great mercy, pass all the great tempests and troubles of this wretched world.

And that also, weetingly, ye do nothing for love nor dread of any earthly creature that should displease him. And there as *(whenever)* any frailty maketh you to fall, beseech his mercy soon to call you to him again with repentance, satisfaction, and contrition of your heart, never more in will to offend him.

Secondly, next him above all earthly things, to be true liegeman in heart, in will, in thought, in deed, unto the king our alder

[1] William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, succeeded his brother Michael, slain at the battle of Agincourt in 1415, as Earl of Suffolk; he was prime minister and favourite of Henry VI. and Queen Margaret, was created in 1443, 23 H. VI., Marquess, and in 1449 26 H. VI., Duke of Suffolk. He was banished by the king at the instigation of the Commons, &c. and murdered on the sea, on the 2d of May, 1450, 28 H. VI. He married Alice, widow of Thomas de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, and daughter and heir of Thomas Chaucer, Esq., of Ewelme, in Oxfordshire, and grand-daughter of Geoffery Chaucer, the celebrated poet.

[2] John de la Pole (after his father's murder) Duke of Suffolk, &c. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and sister of Edward IV. He died in 1491, 7 H. VII. and was buried by his father at Wingfield in Suffolk. [See Letter xxvii.]

most *(greatest)* high and dread sovereign lord, to whom both ye and I be so much bound to; charging you as father can and may, rather to die than to be the contrary, or to know anything that were against the welfare or prosperity of his most royal person, but that as far as your body and life may stretch ye live and die to defend it, and to let his highness have knowledge thereof in all the haste ye can.

Thirdly, in the same wise, I charge you, my dear son, alway as ye be bounden by the commandment of God to do, to love, to worship, your lady and mother; and also that ye obey alway her commandments, and to believe her counsels and advices in all your works, the which dread not but shall be best and truest to you. And if any other body would steer you to the contrary, to flee the counsel in any wise, for ye shall find it naught and evil.

Furthermore, as far as father may and can, I charge you in any wise to flee the company and counsel of proud men, of covetous men, and of flattering men, the more especially and mightily to withstand them, and not to draw nor to meddle with them, with all your might and power; and to draw to you and to your company good and virtuous men, and such as be of good conversation, and of truth, and by them shall ye never be deceived nor repent you of.

Moreover, never follow your own wit in no wise, but in all your works, of such folks as I write of above, ask your advice and counsel, and doing thus, with the mercy of God, ye shall do right well, and live in right much worship, and great heart's rest and ease.

And I will be to you as good lord and father as my heart can think.

And last of all, as heartily and as lovingly as ever father blessed his child in earth, I give you the blessing of Our Lord and of me, which of his infinite mercy increase you in all virtue and good living; and that your blood may by his grace from kindred to kindred multiply in this earth to his service, in such wise as after the departing from this wretched world here, ye and they may glorify him eternally amongst his angels in heaven.

Written of mine hand,
The day of my departing fro this land.
Your true and loving father,

SUFFOLK.

April,
1450, 28 H. VI.

LETTER XXVII.—(X. vol. i. p. 39.)

To the right worshipful John Paston, at Norwich.

RIGHT worshipful sir, I recommend me to you, and am right sorry of that I shall say, and have so washed this little bill with sorrowful tears, that uneths[1] *(scarcely)* ye shall read it.

As on Monday next after May day (4th *of May*) there came tidings to London, that on Thursday before (30*th of April*), the Duke of Suffolk came unto the coasts of Kent[2] full near Dover with his two ships and a little spinner; the which spinner he sent with certain letters, by certain of his trusted men, unto Calais ward, to know how he should be received; and with him met a ship called Nicholas of the Tower[3] with other ships waiting on him, and by them that were in the spinner the master of the Nicholas had knowledge of the duke's coming.

When he espied the duke's ships, he sent forth his boat to weet what they were, and the duke himself spoke to them, and said, he was by the king's commandment sent to Calais ward, &c., and they said he must speak with their master; and so he, with two or three of his men, went forth with them in their boat to the Nicholas; and when he came, the master bade him, "Welcome, traitor," as men say.

And further the master desired to weet if

[1] [Uneth is uneasily—*i. e.*, with difficulty.]

[2] Some of our historians say that he put to sea from the coast of Norfolk.

[3] This ship belonged to Bristol in 1442, 20 H. VI., and was a great ship, with fore-stages, and carried 150 men.

the shipmen would hold with the duke, and they sent word they would not in no wise; and so he was in the Nicholas till Saturday (*2nd May*) next following.

Some say he wrote much thing to be delivered to the king, but that is not verily known.

He had his confessor with him, &c.; and some say he was arraigned in the ship on their manner upon the Impeachments,[1] and found guilty, &c.

Also he asked the name of the ship, and when he knew it, he remembered Stacy that said, if he might escape the danger of the Tower he should be safe, and then his heart failed him, for he thought he was deceived.[2]

And in the sight of all his men he was drawn out of the great ship into the boat, and there was an axe and a stock, and one of the lewdest (*meanest*) of the ship bade him lay down his head, and he should be fairly ferd (*dealt*) with, and die on a sword; and took a rusty sword and smote off his head within [*in less than*] half a dozen strokes, and took away his gown of russet, and his doublet of velvet mailed, and laid his body on the sands of Dover: and some say his head was set on a pole by it; and his men set on the land by [*with*] great circumstance and prey [*parade and robbery.*][3]

And the sheriff of Kent doth watch the body,[4] and (*hath*) sent his under-sheriff to the judges to weet what to do; and also to the king (*to know*) what shall be done.

Further I wot not, but thus far is it, if the process be erroneous let his counsel reverse it, &c.

Also for all the other matters they sleep, and the fryar also, &c. Sir Thomas Keriel[5] is taken prisoner and all the leg-harness, and about 3000 Englishmen slain.

Matthew Gooth[6] (q. *Gough*), with 1500, fled, and saved himself and them. And Peris Brusy was chief captain, and had 10,000 Frenchmen and more, &c.

I pray you let my mistress, your mother, know these tidings, and God have you all in his keeping.

I pray you (*that*) this bill may recommend me to my mistresses, your mother and wife, &c.

James Gresham hath written to John of Dam, and recommendeth him, &c.

Written in great haste at London, the 5th day of May, &c.

By your wife,

WILLIAM LOMNER.[7]

London, Tuesday,
5th of May, 1450,
28 H. VI.

[1] Impeachments by the Commons; this shows that these ships were sent out on purpose to take him, &c.

[2] [Shakspere, who gives the details of his death with great historical accuracy, varies the nature of the prophecy. It is more than probable that the greater number of these predictions were formed after and made to fit the event, and Shakspere may even have varied it to suit his scene: he could not so well have introduced the St. Nicholas of the Tower. Suffolk, on the sea-shore, says to one of his captors:—

"Thy name (Walter) affrights me, in whose sound
is death;
A cunning man did calculate my birth;
And told me that by water I should die:
Yet let not this make thee be bloody-minded;
Thy name is Gualtier, being rightly sounded."—
Henry VI., Part ii.]

[3] [Fenn translates—"and his men sit on the land by great circumstance (q. *by great numbers*) and pray." He then suggests another reading—"and his men (*were*) set on the land be (*together with*) great circumstance (*wealth*) and prey (*booty*)." The original is—"and hes men sette on the londe be grette circōst^nce and preye." See also the second paragraph of the next letter.]

[4] His body was taken from Dover Sands, and carried to the collegiate church of Wingfield, in Suffolk, where it lies interred under an altar tomb, in the chancel, with his effigies in armour, painted, gilt, &c. carved in wood, lying on it. It is remarkably well executed, as is that of Alice his wife, likewise, which lies at his right hand. [This is a mistake of Fenn's. There are three monuments in Wingfield church to other members of the same family, but there is no memorial for him. They are engraved in Stothard's 'Monumental Effigies.'—See Gent. Mag. for Feb. 1840.]

[5] He was taken prisoner at the battle of Fourmigni, fought on the 18th of April, 1450, where he defended himself with great bravery. He was beheaded by Queen Margaret's order, after the second battle of St. Alban's, in 1460.

[6] Query if the brave Matthew Gough, who was afterwards slain in Cade's rebellion, fighting on the citizen's part, in July 1450, at the Battle of the Bridge.

[7] [This singular subscription is explained by Mr Fenn to have arisen from the fact of W. Lomner having been frequently employed as amanuensis by Marg. Paston, many of her letters being in the same handwriting, and that he had here forgotten at the instant in what capacity he was writing.]

LETTER XXVIII.—(XI. vol. i. p. 45.)

To my right worshipful cousin, John Paston, of Norwich, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful sir, I recommend me unto you in the most goodly wise that I can; and forasmuch as ye desired of me to send you word of divers matters here, which have been opened in the parliament openly, I send you of them such as I can.

First most especial, that for very truth upon Saturday that last was, the Duke of Suffolk was taken in the sea, and there he was beheaded, and his body with the appurtenance set at land at Dover; and all the folks that he had with him were set to land, and had none harm.

Also the king hath somewhat granted to have the resumption again, in some but not in all, &c.

Also if ye purpose to come hither to put up your bills, ye may come now in a good time, for now every man that hath any they put them in, and so may ye if ye come, with God's grace to your pleasure.[1]

Furthermore, upon the 4th day of this month, the Earl of Devonshire[2] came hither with 300 men well beseen[3] [*provided*], &c. and upon the morrow after, my Lord of Warwick, with 400 and more, &c.

Also as it is noised here, Calais shall be besieged within this seven days, &c.

God save the king, and send us peace, &c.

Other tidings be there none here, but Almighty God have you in his keeping.

Written at Leicester, the 6th day of May.

Your cousin,

JOHN CRANE.[4]

Leicester,
Wednesday, 6th of May,
1450, 28 H. VI.

LETTER XXIX.—(XII. Vol. i. p. 53.)

Thomas Howys appears to have been a superintendent of Sir John Fastolf's affairs at Caister. He was rector of Blofield in Norfolk, from about 1460 to 1471; and was one of Sir John's executors. Castlecomb is in Wiltshire. [For a notice of Sir J. Fastolf, see a subsequent Letter.]

To my trusty and well-beloved friend, Sir Thomas Howys, Parson of Castlecomb.

TRUSTY and well-beloved friend, I greet you well. (*Here follow some orders respecting his affairs at Caister.*) And I pray you send me word who dare be so hardy to kick against you in my right; and say (*to*) them on my half (*behalf*) that they shall be quyt[5] [*requited*], as far as law and reason will; and if they will not dread nor obey that, then they shall be quyt by Blackbeard or Whitebeard,[6] that is to say, by God or the devil; and therefore I charge you, send me word whether such as have been mine adversaries before this time continue still in their wilfulness, &c.

Item, I hear ofttimes many strange reports of demenys[7] of the governance of my place at Caister and other places, as in my chatell approving, in my wines, the keeping of my

[1] Here follows some advice relative to some private bills of J. Paston, to be presented to the parliament.

[2] Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, was taken at the battle of Towton in 1461, and afterwards beheaded, by order of Edward IV., he having revolted from Edward to Henry VI.

[3] [Fenn explains this word, "A fine body of men well arrayed and accoutred."]

[4] The Cranes were a good family, flourishing at his time in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, and the writer of this letter appears to have belonged to the court.

[5] [Fenn translates *quiet* in this and the following instance.]

[6] Swearing, we are told by some of our historians, was the fashion of the time, and we are here presented with one of the usual oaths.

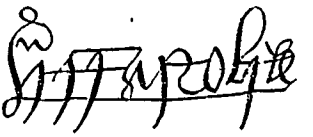
[7] [Perhaps from the French *demence*, follies, madness; or *misdemeanors*. Fenn translates *the demeaning*. "As in my chattel approving," &c., is—as is proved in my chattels, &c.]

wardrobe and clothes, the avail [*use, profit*] of my conies at Hellesdon, &c., and approvement of my lands; praying you heartily, as my full trust is in you, to help reform it. And that ye suffer no vicious man at my place of Caister (*to*) abide, but well governed and diligent, as yet will answer to it.

Almighty God keep you. Written at London, the 27th day of May, in the 28th year of the reign of King Henry VI.

JOHN FASTOLF, *Knight*.

London, Wednesday, 27th of May, 1450, 28 H. VI.



LETTER XXX.—(XIII. vol. i. p. 55.)

This letter was written in 1465, 5 E. IV.; but it relates so entirely to a transaction in June and July, 1450, 28 H. VI. that I have thought it better to place it here, according to the date of the event it records, than according to the date of the time when it was written. It presents to us a certain and curious account of the commons of Kent, when assembled at Blackheath under Cade in 1450, and was written by J. Payn (then a servant to Sir John Fastolf) who was taken by them, carried about with them, and threatened to have been beheaded, &c. It truly shows to us the violence and barbarity of a body of men, collected chiefly from the meanest of the people, combined together for the pretended purpose of reformation; but really for the destruction of all good order and legal government. J. Payn had been formerly a servant to Sir John Fastolf of some consequence, and was now a petitioner for some relief, on account of his losses and misfortunes, while a prisoner, &c., with the rebels, from John Paston, one of the executors of Sir John Fastolf's will.

To my right honourable master, John Paston.

RIGHT honourable and my right entirely beloved master, I recommend me unto you with all manner of due reverence in the most lowly wise, as me ought to do, evermore desiring to hear of your worshipful state, prosperity, and welfare; the which I beseek (*beseech*) God, of his abundant grace, increase and maintain to his most pleasance and to your heart's desire.

Pleaseth it, your good and gracious mastership, tenderly to consider the great losses and hurts that your poor petitioner hath, and hath had, ever since the commons of Kent came to the Blackheath, and that is at fifteen years passed; whereas my master, Sir John Fastolf, knight, that is your testator, commanded your beseecher to take a man, and two of the best horses that were in his stable, with him, to ride to the commons of Kent to get the articles that they come for; and so I did, and all so soon as I came to the Blackheath, the captain[1] made the commons to take me; and for the savation (*saving*) of my master's horses, I made my fellow to ride away with the two horses; and I was brought forthwith before the Captain of Kent; and the captain demanded (*of*) me, what was my cause of coming thither, and why that I made my fellow to steal away with the horses; and I said that I came thither to cheer with my wife's brethren, and others that were mine allies, and gossips of mine, that were present there; and then was there one there and (*who*) said to the captain that I was one of Sir John Fastolf's men, and the two horses were Sir John Fastolf's; and then the captain let cry Treason upon me throughout all the field, and brought me at four parts of the field, with a herald of the Duke of Exeter[2] before me, in the Duke's coat-of-arms, making four oyez at four parts of the field; proclaiming openly by the said herald, that I was sent thither for to espy their puissance and their habiliments of war, from the greatest traitor that was in England or in France, as the said captain made proclamation at that time, from one Sir John Fastolf, knight, the which minished (*diminished*) all the garrisons of Normandy, and Manns, and Mayn, the

[1] Jack Cade; he called himself John Mortimer, of the house of March, he was likewise styled Captain Mend-all.

[2] It cannot be supposed that the Duke of Exeter, a faithful Lancastrian, took any part in this commotion, but it is probable his herald might be forced into the service of the rebels [or the herald might have joined the rebels of his own accord].

which was the cause of the losing of all the king's title and right of an heritance that he had beyond sea. And moreover, he said that the said Sir John Fastolf had furnished his place[1] with the old soldiers of Normandy, and habiliments of war, to destroy the commons of Kent when that they came to Southwark, and therefore he said plainly that I should lose my head; and so forthwith I was taken, and led to the captain's tent, and one axe and one block was brought forth to have smitten off mine head; and then my master Poynyngs[2] your brother, with other of my friends came, and letted (*prevented*) the captain, and said plainly, that there should die an hundred or two that in case be that I died; and so by that mean my life was saved at that time.

And then I was sworn to the captain, and to the commons, that I should go to Southwark and array me in the best wise that I could, and come again to them to help them; and so I got the articles, and brought them to my master, and that cost me more amongst the commons that day than 27*s.*

Whereupon I came to my master Fastolf, and brought him the articles, and informed him of all the matter, and counselled him to put away all his habiliments of war, and the old soldiers, and so he did, and went himself to the Tower, and all his meny[3] [*household*] with him but Betts and one Matthew Brayn; and had I not been, the commons would have brenned (*burnt*) his place and all his tenuries; where though it cost me of my own proper goods at that time more than six marks (4*l.*) in meat and drink, and (*yet*) notwithstanding the captain that same time let take me at the White Hart in Southwark, and there commanded Lovelace to despoil me out of mine array, and so he did; and there he took a fine gown of muster devillers[4] furred with fine beavers, and one pair of brigandines[5] covered with blue velvet and gilt nails, with leg-harness; the value of the gown and the brigandines 8*l.*

Item, the captain sent certain of his meny to my chamber in your rents,[6] and there (*they*) broke up my chest, and took away one obligation of mine that was due unto me of 36*l.* by a priest of Paul's, and one other obligation of one knight of 10*l.*, and my purse with five rings of gold, and 17*s.* 6*d.* of gold and silver; and one harness complete of the touch of Milan: and one gown of fine perse blue, furred with martens; and two gowns, one furred with bogey, (*budge,*) and one other lined with frieze; and there would have smitten off mine head when that they had despoiled me at (*the*) White Hart; and there my master Poynyngs and my friends saved me, and so I was put up, till at night that the battle was at London Bridge; and then at night the captain put me out into the battle at the bridge, and there I was wounded, and hurt near hand to death; and there I was six hours in the battle, and might never come out thereof; and four times before that time I was carried about throughout Kent and Sussex, and there they would have smitten off my head; and in Kent there as (*where*) my wife dwelled, they took away all our goods moveable that we had; and there would have hanged my wife and five of my children, and left her no more goods but her kirtle and her smock; and anon after that hurling (*commotion*), the Bishop of Rochester[7] impeached me to the queen, and so I was arrested by the queen's commandment into the Marshalsea, and there was in right great duress, and fear of mine life, and was threatened to have been hanged, drawn, and quartered; and so (*they*) would have made me have impeach my master Fastolf of treason,[8]

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[1] [This must mean Fastolf's house in Southwark, alluded to in Letter cxxxi.]

[2] Robert Poynyngs married Elizabeth, the sister of J. Paston, and was sword-bearer and carver to Cade.

[3] [Fenn translates—*family.*]

[4] Probably some kind of velvet.

[5] A coat of mail, consisting of many-jointed and scale-like plates, &c.

[6] [Rents is a house or building. The term exists yet in London, in Fulwood's Rents, near Gray's Inn, and a few other instances.]

[7] John Lowe, a learned divine.

[8] Why this attempt was made upon him to accuse his master, Sir John Fastolf, of treason I cannot conceive, unless it was, because Sir John left his house, &c. in Southwark, and retired to the Tower, instead of resisting and attacking the rebels.

and because that I would not, they had me up to Westminster, and there would have sent me to the gaol-house at Windsor, but my wife's and one cousin of mine own, that were yeomen of the crown, they went to the king, and got grace and one charter of pardon. Per le votre,

J. PAYN.

June and July, 1450. 28 H. VI., but written 1465. 5 E. IV.

LETTER XXXI.—(XX. vol. iii. p. 87.)

After J. Paston had received this letter, it seems as if he had sent it to my Lord Oxford, for on the back of it, in J. Paston's hand-writing, is the following direction. "To the rith worspfull and my rith speciall Lord my Lord of Oxenford." The estates in dispute between J. Paston and my Lord Molyns were at Gresham in Norfolk, where Sir William Paston, the judge, had purchased the moiety of a manor, &c. of Thomas Chaucer, Esq. The other moiety now in dispute had been in the possession of the ancestors of Ellenor (now the wife of Robert Hungerford, Lord Molyns), who was the daughter and heir of Sir William Molyns, Lord Molyns, who was killed at the siege of Orleans in 1428, and had likewise come into Sir William's possession. The disputes were carried on for several years, and how at last finally settled I know not.

To my right especial master, John Paston, in haste.

RIGHT worthy worshipful Sir, and mine especial master, I recommend me to you, and pray you weet that I was yesterday at my Lord Chancellor's[1] house, and there I spake with White, and he told me that he had the letter that ye sued for from . . . ., directed to the Lord Molyns of that substance that ye had sued to him for an especial assise[2] and an oyer and determiner,[3] and that he should command his men being at Gresham to depart thence, and that the profits thereof should be received by an indifferent person, safely to be kept till the right were determined between you and my Lord Molyns, &c., which letter White sent forth by a man of my Lord Chancellor to the Lord Molyns. And he sent his answer in writing of this substance, that it should not like my Lord Chancellor to grant assise, &c., forasmuch as the Lord Molyns had sore belaboured in his country to pease *(appease)* and still the people[4] there to restrain them from rising, and so he was daily laboured there about in the king's service, and that considered, he trusted verily that there should none assise be granted to your intent; and he said further in his answer, if he might attend to be in Norfolk, and leave the necessary service that he did to the king now in Wiltshire, he would be but well pleased that you had your assize, for he knew his title and his evidence so good for his part, that he durst well put it in my Lord Chancellor and in what judge he would call to him; and where *(as)* my Lord Chancellor desired him to avoid his men, from Gresham, he trusted that my lord would not desire that, because he had his possession, and that it was his wife's right, and so him thought it against reason that he should avoid utterly his possession.

This same Monday goeth my Lord Chancellor and my Lord of Buckingham into Kent, to sit upon an oyer and determiner[5] at Rochester, and White told me that there is written a general oyer and determiner to be in Norfolk; and that therefore, and for the Lord Molyns writing, him seemeth it is not to your avail to sue for an especial assise nor for an oyer and determiner.

When I came hitherward, I met with my Lord of Norfolk, between Barkway and Baberham homeward, and whether he shall come again hither or not I wot not, but I trow ra-

[1] William de Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester, he was soon after succeeded by John Kemp, Archbishop of York.

[2] A writ directed to the sheriff for recovery of possession of things immoveable, whereof yourself or ancestors have been disseised.

[3] Is a commission especially granted to certain persons for the hearing and determining of causes, and was formerly only in use upon some sudden outrage or insurrection in any place.

[4] These disturbances amongst the people were the remains of Cade's rebellion, which had been lately suppressed.

[5] These commissions of oyer and determiner were to try those who had been concerned in the late rebellion under Cade.

ther yes than nay, for it is said that all the lords be sent for to be here on Monday or Tuesday next coming for a council.

The Chief Justice[1] is not here, nor none other justice, except Danvers,[2] *(who)* is now made Judge of the Common Pleas, and is forth into Kent with the lords, &c.

All this tofore was written on the Monday next after our Lady-day *(17th of August)*, and this same Wednesday was it told that Cherburg is gone, and we have not now a foot of land in Normandy, and men are afraid that Calais will be besieged hastily, &c. Pynchamore shall tell you by mouth more than I have leisure to write now to you. I wrote to mine em.[3] that there were nine or ten thousand men up in Wiltshire, and I had it of the report of Whittock's mede *(? maid)* but I trow it is not so, for here is now little speech thereof, nevertheless if I hear more I shall send you word hereafter by some loaders *(carriers)* that come to Saint Bartholomew's fair.

Written in haste at London, the Wednesday next after our Lady-day, &c. *(the Assumption, 15th August.)*

Your own simple Servant,
JAMES GRESHAM.

London,
Wednesday, 19th of August, 1450,
28 H. VI.

LETTER XXXII.—(XXI. vol. iii. p. 93.)

I have given this letter, as it informs us of the price and value of land at this period. Fourteen years' purchase seems high, since it does not appear that Sir John bought it for its convenience, as he mentions selling it again. By calling it "Heigham's Place," I suppose there was a house as well as land. In 1470, twenty years after this time, the reward offered for apprehending the Duke of Clarence was 1000*l.* in money, or 100*l.* a-year in land. This seems to fix land at that period at only ten years' purchase; perhaps the preceding civil wars had caused this abatement in its value. [This Sir John Fastolf seems to have been a thoroughly worldly, money-getting man, and his letters must set at rest the statement that Shakspere had him in his mind in his character of Sir John Falstaff. There is, indeed, not one feature of resemblance.]

To my right trusty friend Sir Thomas Howys, parson of Castlecombe, being at Caister, and William Barker, in haste, at Caister Inn, by Yarmouth.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved friend, I greet you well, and as for Heigham's Place to be sold, as ye advise me to buy it at the sum of an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) or within, and reserving in the said payment mine own duty, and pay the remanent in wool to the said Heigham's creditors, as your letter maketh mention; I have understood that William Jenney shall be here this week, and I shall veele *(feel)* him how near it may be sold; for if the widow will sell it after fourteen year or fifteen year, that it may be lett, send me utterly word, for I will not melle *(meddle)* of it else thus advised; and send ye me word how much more in value in a stone shall I sell my wool, and how another chapman will give me for the place when I have bought it; but after [*the rate of?*] fourteen year I would buy the place.

Written at London, the 15th day of October, in the 29th year of King Henry VI.

JOHN FASTOLF.

London,
Thursday, 15th of October, 1450, 29 H. VI.

LETTER XXXIII.—(XXII. vol. iii. p. 95.)

[THIS letter is from James Gresham in London, to J. Paston at Norwich, dated about October, 1450, and contains merely details of legal proceedings, in which J. Paston was engaged.]

[1] John Hody was at this time Chief Justice of the King's Bench.

[2] Robert Danvers became a judge of the Common Pleas 14th of August, 1450.

[3] Quere this abbreviated word. [It is most probably *eme*, uncle.—See the same word used in a like doubtful sense at page 4.]

LETTER XXXIV.—(XXIII. vol. iii. p. 101.)

[This letter is from J. Damme and J. Gresham, to J. Paston, and like the last, contains merely legal details of no general interest. This James Gresham was an eminent lawyer, and great-grandfather to Sir Thomas Gresham, founder of the Royal Exchange.]

LETTER XXXV.—(XXIV. vol. iii. p. 103.)

I have presented this letter to the reader, to show him that the forging of deeds, grants, &c., was a common offence many centuries ago; here it mentions an acquittance as being forged, and likewise an office forgery, which would affect Sir John's manor of Bradwell. At the time here mentioned, forgery was an offence at common law only, and the punishment was usually fine and imprisonment. [Sir John seems to have been an active litigator, and his accusation against the "parson of Stratford" is an interesting little picture of the manners of the times. It must not, however, be supposed that the damage of which Sir John complains was either wantonly or feloniously done; it was evidently upon some disputed claim of rights.]

To my right trusty friend and servant, Sir Thomas (Howys), *parson of Castlecombe, and John Bocking, at Prince's Inn, in Norwich or at Beccles.*

Right trusty and well-beloved servant, I greet you well; and forasmuch as I understand that on Monday next the oyer and terminer shall be holden at Beccles, and ye advise to send you a certificate for cause of the forged quittance by Sir John Sypton, which writing I send you by the bearer hereof, praying you that ye solicit to my counsel that the said Sir John Sypton be indicted thereupon, and that ye forget not Ulveston, Andrews, and the others, that forged a false office to cast my manor of Bradwell into the king's hand.

Item, I send you a copy of Sypton's plea and quittance forged, to ground your bill by it.

No more for haste, but God keep you: written at London, the 4th day of December, in the 29th year of King Henry VI.

Item, Sir John Buck, parson of Stratford, fished my stanks at Dedham, and helped to break my dam, destroyed my new mill, and was against me always at Dedham, to the damage of 20*l.* which may be indicted also.

Item, he and John Cole hath by force this year, and other years, taken out of my waters at Dedham, to the number of twenty-four swans and cygnets, and I pray you this be not forgotten.

John Fastolf.

London,
Friday, 4th of December, 1450, 29 H. VI.

LETTER XXXVI.—(XXV. vol iii. p. 107.)

This letter was written by John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, to the high sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk, in consequence of his having been informed that he intended to quash certain bills against particular persons, and not suffer them to appear at the next sessions, &c. This sentence in the original letter is ambiguous from an omission of a word or two, but I think the above is the true meaning of it. [By the omission of the word *to*, which we have included in brackets, we think the sense is clear.] These commissions were sent out in November 1450, soon after the suppression of Cade's rebellion, to try those who were imprisoned in different parts of the kingdom for the part they had then taken. The Earl seems to express himself as friendly to the people, and wishes to be a mean of redressing their grievances. He married Elizabeth, sole daughter and heir of Sir John Howard, knight, by which marriage he became possessed of the manor of East Winch, in the county of Norfolk. He was beheaded when about 55 years of age, in 1461.

To my right trusty and entirely well-beloved John Jermyn,[1] *Sheriff of Norfolk.*

Right trusty and entirely well beloved, I greet you well, and where *(as)* late by the king's commandment in the time of his parliament holden now last at Westminster, I was in person at Norwich, holding sessions of oyer *(and)* determiner with Yelverton, one of the king's

[1] John Jermyn, the high sheriff, was ancestor to Sir Thomas Jermyn of Rushbrooke, in Suffolk, who was created a peer by Charles I. in 1643; but this family became extinct in 1708.

judges, by great space and great attendance, which for to have done with such diligence in the parliament time I would have been right loath, but for the public weal of all the shire.

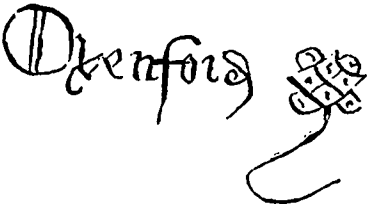
It is not also out of your remembrance what indisposition the commons of both counties in the end of summer last passed were of, and how the king, by the whole advice of all the great council of England, to cease their rumour sent hither his said commission, and how I have done my part therein I report me to all the world; I hear a grudging, nevertheless, that through favour in your office, [to] the people that hath complained by many and great horrible bills against certain persons, should not be showed at this next sessions at Lynn,[1] nor farther in the said commission; which if it so were, as God defend (*forbid*), might cause a latter error worse than the first.

I pray you therefore that ye would write to me your disposition how ye purpose to be demeaned, and how I shall take you for the execution of the king's commission and the public weal of all the shire; and after that that ye write to me, so will I take you, letting you weet that I were loath to labour farther but if (*unless*) I wist that the commons should be eased, as God's law would, and if any errors grow, the default shall not be found in me.

I pray you moreover to give credence to the bearer hereof, and the Trinity keep you. Written at Winch, the 2nd day of January,

The Earl of Oxford.

Winch,
Saturday, 2nd of January, 1450.
29 H. VI.



NUMBER XXXVII. (XXVI. Vol. iii. p. 109.)

That the reader may the better understand the matters here referred to, it will be necessary just to mention the leading transactions which occasioned this accusation. The parliament met at Westminster in the latter end of the year 1450, when the Duke of Somerset, returning from France, was so publicly censured for the loss of Normandy, that the Commons petitioned the king to send him to the Tower; it might be therefore at this time that the Duke of Norfolk made this speech in the House of Lords; the Duke of Somerset, however, was released as soon as the parliament broke up. But as Guienne (which stands as part of the charge against him here) was not completely lost before the year 1453, when this Duke was again committed to the Tower, and an accusation brought against him by the Commons before the Lords, it is, I think, most probable that it was then that the Duke of Norfolk stepped forwards as his accuser. The exact time, however, is immaterial, as the force and energy of the speech remain the same whenever it was spoken, and that it was spoken is evident, from that sentence in which he says, "Wherefor for to abbregge my langage, &c." Though concise, it is nervous, full to the purpose, and artfully addressed to the passions both of the noble Lords and the people in general, and in form and method would not disgrace a modern orator. Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, after the death of the Duke of Suffolk became the queen's favourite and prime minister, and was both a valiant soldier and an able statesman: he fell in the first battle of St. Alban's, where he commanded the royal army, in May 1455. John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, succeeded his father in 1435, and died in 1461. These dukes were both of them great-grandsons to John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. The first by his father, the second by his mother. On the top of the paper on which this speech is written is the word cōp, meaning "copy," which shows that this was copied from the original paper for the Duke's own use, as the paper and hand-writing are both of the time of Henry VI. And at the bottom is written "Einsi signe M. Norff." [It is certainly a most interesting specimen of our early and genuine parliamentary oratory, although in one particular instance the language is more plain spoken than is now allowed.]

The speech of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, against Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, in the House of Lords.

My Lords, ye know well enough the great pains, labours, and diligences, that before this time I have done, to the intent that the over great dishonours and losses that be come to this full noble realm of England, by the false means of some persons that have taken on them over great authority in this realm,

[1] [*Showed*—*i. e.*, the bills should not be *exhibited*; the term now used in some law proceedings—articles of the peace, for instance.]

should be known. And that the persons living that have done them should be corrected after the merits of their deserts. And to that intent I have denounced, and delivered to you in writing, certain articles against the Duke of Somerset, which is one of them that is guilty thereof; whereto the Duke of Somerset hath answered; and to that that he hath answered, I have replied in such wise that I trow to be sure enough that there shall be no vailable thing be said to the contrary of my said replication; and as much as he would say shall be but falseness and leasings, as by the probations [*proofs*] that shall be made thereupon shall mow [1] [*be able to*] appear; howbeit that to all people of good intendment, knowing how justice ought to be ministered, it is full apparent that the denunciations against him made be sufficiently proved by deeds that have followed thereof; whereupon I have required to have overture of justice by you, which ye have not yet done to me, whereof I am so heavy that I may no longer bear it, specially since the matter by me pursued is so worshipful for all the realm, and for you, and so agreeable to God, and to all the subjects of this realm, that it may be no greater; and it is such that for any favour of lineage, nor for any other cause there should be no dissimulation, for doubt lest that other in time coming take example thereof; and lest that the full noble virtue of justice, that of God is so greatly recommended, be extinct or quenched by the false opinions of some, that for the great bribes that the said Duke of Somerset hath promised and given them, have turned their hearts from the way of truth and of justice; some, saying that the cases by him committed be but cases of trespass, and others, taking a colour to make an universal peace; whereof every man that is true to the said crown hath[2] greatly to marvel that any man would say that the loss of two so noble duchies as Normandy and Guyenne, that be well worth a great realm, coming by successions of fathers and mothers to the said crown, is but trespass; whereas it hath been seen in many realms and lordships, that, for the loss of towns or castles without siege, the captains that have lost them have been dead and beheaded, and their goods lost: as in France one that lost Cherburgh; and also a knight that fled for dread of battle should be beheaded; so that all these things may be found in the laws written, and also in the book cleped (*called*) "*L'arbre de Bataille;*" wherefore, for to abridge my language, I require you that forasmuch as the more part of the deeds committed by the said Duke of Somerset (*have*) been committed in the realm of France, that, by the laws of France, process be made thereupon; and that all things that I have delivered and shall deliver, be seen and understood by people having knowledge thereof, and that the deeds committed by him in this realm be in like wise seen and understood by people learned in the laws of this land; and for proof thereof to grant commissions to inquire thereof, as by reason and of custom it ought to be done, calling God and you all, my lords, to witness of the devoirs by me done in this said matter; and requiring you that this my bill, and all other my devoirs may be enacted before you, and that I may have it exemplified under the king's great seal for my discharge and acquittal of my truth, making protestation that in case that ye make not to me overture of justice upon the said case, I shall for my discharge do my pain that my said devoirs and the said lack of justice shall be known through all this realm. Ainsi Signe,

JOHN MOWBRAY, *Norfolk.*

1450, or 1453. 29 or 32 H. VI.

[1] [See other instances of the use of this word, in the Introduction. Fenn here explains it, as *moreover* or *soon*. It is indeed our present word *may*, which, as well as *can*, was frequently used in the sense of *being able to, having the power to.*]

[2] [Fenn's translation—*ought.*]

LETTER XXXVIII.—(XXVII. vol. iii. p. 117.)

This very curious letter gives us a true picture of the proceedings in our courts of justice at this time. We find those in the highest departments of the law openly partial; and that the suitors in the court came attended by large parties of friends in military array to drive away their opponents; from this the wisdom of our present regulation is apparent, when all soldiers are ordered to quit the town in which assizes are holden during the time of their continuance, lest it should be supposed they might befriend one and intimidate the other party in any legal process: this proceeding is now always enforced, unless when any daring offender against the laws is to be tried, and there are any apprehensions of an intended rescue. To the honour of our country it may be truly said, that our judges for ages past have been, not only thought, but always found, superior to either bribery, corruption, or partiality; and to the immortal honour of our present sovereign King George III., it ought to be ever remembered, that he, in the beginning of his reign, appointed his judges for life, who, before, held their high office only during the royal pleasure. It does not appear what the business was which caused these complaints against the proceedings. [Nor does it appear to us so clearly as to Sir John Fenn that this letter contains any *proofs* of the partiality of the judges, or of the overawing of the court: in fact, the last was unnecessary if the opposite party were assured of the other. It is the common complaint in all times of a defeated suitor, and from what we have seen of Sir J. Fastolf, and even of Master Paston, we should not hastily conclude that their cases were always just and right. The present was an age of forms, particularly in legal matters, and no doubt these forms were often taken advantage of to defeat right, and thus produce oppression. But these were accidents inherent to the system, and are by no means to be taken as wilful and partial on the part of the judges.]

To my reverend and worshipful master, Sir John Fastolf, knight, be this letter delivered.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful master, I recommend me lowly unto you; please you to weet the Sunday, next after the feast of the [1]Invention of the Cross, the 9th day of May, at Caister, I received a letter from you by your clerk, W. Barker, the tenour whereof I shall do speed in all haste goodly; but for the more special cause of my writing at this time is to give you relation of the untrue demeaning this oyer (*and*) determiner, by the partiality of the judges of it, for when the counsel of the city of Norwich, of the town of Swaffham, yours, my master Inglos, Pastons, and many others plaintiffs, had put in and declared both by writing and by word before the judges the lawful exceptions in many wise, the judges by their wilfulness might not find in their heart to give not as much as a beck nor a twinkling of their eye toward, but took it to derision—God reform such partiality; and because Prisot[2] thought that if the sessions of the oyer and determiner had been holden at Norwich as they begun, he supposed it should not so fast pass to the intent of Todenham, and Heydon, and their fellows, as it should do else in other place, but enjoined (*adjourned*) to Walsingham, where they have greatest rule, there to be holden on Tuesday, 4th day of May.

This knowing, my Master Yelverton,[3] Jenney, and others might well conceive how the governance of the oyer and determiner should proceed, for it was the most partial place of all the shire, and thither were cleped (*called*) all the friends, knights, and esquires, and other gentlemen that would in no wise do otherwise than they would, and the said Todenham, Heydon, and other oppressors of their set, came down thither, as I understand, with 400 horse and more, and considering how their well-willers were there assembled at their instance, it had been right jeopardous and fearful for any of the plaintiffs to have been present, for there was not one of the plaintiffs nor complainants there, but your right faithful and trusty well-willer John Paston. And my Master Yelverton said full discreetly, and controlled the said Prisot when he said, sitting in the Guildhall of Norwich, these words to the mayor and the commonalty:—

"A Sir Mayor and your brethren, as to

[1] The 3rd of May.

[2] In 1443 John Privot [*Prisot* uniformly in the original] was made a serjeant at law, and in 1449 was appointed Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, which post he held till 1462, when he was succeeded by Robert Danby.

[3] Sir William Yelverton, of Rougham, in Norfolk, became a serjeant at law in 1440, was made a judge of the King's Bench in 1444, created a Knight of the Bath in 1460, and was alive in 1467. He married first Jane, daughter of Oliver le Gros, Esq., of Sloley, in Norfolk; secondly, Ela, daughter of Sir Robert Brewse, of Wetingham, in Suffolk, by each of whom he left issue.

the process of your complaints we will put them in continuance, but in all other we will proceed," which words Yelverton thought right partial; and beside this, the said Prisot would suffer no man that was learned to speak for the plaintiffs, but took it as a venom, and took them by the nose at every third word, which might well be known for open partiality.

And as for the Lord Scales,[1] ye know well what he is towards you, and namely for Hickling matter. Also to know some of your feint friends, at the time that my Lord of Norfolk sat at Norwich upon the oyer and determiner, Sir John Heveningham might not find it in his heart to go four furlongs from his dwelling-place to the shire-house, but now he could ride from Norwich to Walsingham to sit as one of the commissioners; as to the rule of others, that ye would have supposed your well-willers, how they have behaved at Walsingham I shall send you word in all haste when Berney come home to Caister, for he is not yet come from Walsingham, but this I know well, that they found none obstacle nor impediment in their conscience in all your matter, but how they have done with Norwich, Swaffham, and Paston, I am not yet clearly informed, I suppose they are put in respite; I hear say Heydon sueth for an end to be had with the city of Norwich; and as to the names of them that passed on their acquittal against you, Broyn[2] can well inform you, I understand that Sir Robert Conyers, Calthorp,[3] (*and*) Mundford[4] were captains, and Master Richard Doget also.

Item, as for the two "venire facias," ye sent to be returned for your manors of Bradwell and Beyton, I have done them to be returned of such names as I have sent word before, saving some be taken and excepted out. Moreover, as for the matter of Sir John Sybton; Geney and Rawlins give full counsel that it should abide till the matter of Bradwell might proceed, so that both matters might take upon a day, for they say it will draw twenty marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) to labour the jury to London, and yet it were hard to bring about; and they give you counsel in all wise that ye labour to have Yelverton judge at that time, and in all wise, both in that matter and in all others, that ye beware that Prisot have not to have do in anywise, for then all will be nought. Of all other matters I shall send you word in all haste goodly, for at this time I had no leisure because of the hasty coming up of Hugh Fenn, whom I beseech you to feel of the demeaning of the oyer and determiner, for he can tell you much and (*if*) he will, whether he will or nay I cannot say; for I know well he was at Walsingham. And I beseech Almighty Jesu have you in his merciful governance.

Written at Caister the Sunday 9th day of May, in the 29th year of King Henry VI.

Caister, Sunday 9 May, 1451, 29 H. VI.

On the back of the letter is written,

I pray you be not displeased though I have not subscribed my name within forth, for it is of negligence, saith Howys, parson of Castlecomb.

LETTER XXXIX.—(XXVIII. vol. iii. p. 125.)

The former part of this letter is of little consequence; we learn from it, indeed, that misrepresentations subversive of good neighbourhood proceeded then as now from servants and others. In the latter part we find treacle spoken of as a medicine of great efficacy and consequence. Sir Henry Inglos's will was proved on the 4th of July, 1451, by which he desired to be buried in the Presbytery of the Priory of St. Faith, at Horsham St. Faith's, in Norfolk, a priory founded by Robert de Caen, in 1105, in memory of a miraculous delivery from imprisonment by his prayers to God and St. Faith the Virgin. The removal of his body so immediately after his death seems extraordinary.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, praying you to weet that I have spoken with my Lady Felbrigg of that ye bade me

[1] Thomas Lord Scales was a Knight of the Garter: he left an only daughter and heir married to Sir Anthony Widville, who in her right was summoned to parliament as Baron Scales in 1461.

[2] [Brayn, perhaps, who is mentioned in page 22.]

[3] He was of a very ancient and flourishing family at this time, in the county of Norfolk, but which is now extinct in the male line.

[4] This was an ancient family, formerly situated at Feltwell, in Norfolk.

speak to her of, and she said plainly to me that she would not, nor never was advised [*never had thought*], neither to let the Lord Molyns nor none other to have their intents as for that matter while that she liveth; and she was right evil paid with Sauter, that he should report as it was told you that he should have reported; and she made right much of you, and said that she would nought that no servant of hers should report nothing that should be against you, otherwise than she would that your servants should do or say against her; and if either your servants did against her, or any of hers against you, she would that it should be reformed betwixt you and her, and that ye might be all one; for she said in good faith she desired your friendship; and as for the report of Sauter, she said she supposed that he would nought report so, and if she might know that he did, she would blame him therefore; I told her that it was told me since that ye rode, and that it grieved me more that the said Sauter should report as he did than it had been reported of another, inasmuch as I had ought him good will before; and she prayed me that I should not believe such reports till I knew the truth.

I was at Topps's at dinner on St. Peter's day: there my Lady Felbrigg and other gentlewomen desired to have had you there; they said they should all have been the merrier if ye had been there. My cousin Topps hath much care till she hears good tidings of her brother's matter; she told me that they should keep a day on Monday next coming betwixt her brother and Sir Andrew Hugard (*Ogard*) and Wyndham; I pray you send me word how they speed, and how ye speed in your own matters also.

Also, I pray you heartily that ye will send me a pot with treacle in haste, for I have been right evil at ease and your daughter both, since that ye yeden (*went*) hence, and one of the tallest young men of this parish lyeth sick, and hath a great myrr[1] (*murrain q?*) how he shall do God knoweth.

I have sent my uncle Berney the pot with treacle that ye did buy for him; mine aunt recommendeth her to you, and prayeth you to do for her as the bill maketh mention of that I send you with this letter, and as ye think best for to do therein. Sir Harry Inglos is passed to God this night, whose soul God assoil; and was carried forth this day at nine of the clock to St. Faith's, and there shall be buried.

If ye desire to buy any of his stuff, I pray you send me word thereof in haste, and I shall speak to Robert Inglos, and to Wichingham thereof; I suppose they be executors. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich in haste on the Thursday next after St. Peter.

I pray you trust not to the sheriff[2] for no fair language. Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Thursday,
1st of July, 1451, 29 H. VI.

LETTER XL.—(XXIX. vol. iii. p. 129.)

This letter relates to what passed at Blackheath when the commons of Kent assembled there under Jack Cade, in 1450, when Robert Poynyngs was his sword-bearer and carver, who afterwards married Elizabeth, the sister of John Paston. It could not be written before 1451, as it gives an account of Poynyng's pardon, and of the priest's confession who had accused the Lords Cromwell and Grey, and Sir John Fastolf, of treason.

To my Master Paston.

PLEASE your good mastership to weet, that as yesterday came letters from London that the parson must needs up to London to save the next amerciament; and so (*he*) is forth to appear, if he needs must, xv Johannis (*quinsieme Johannis*, 8 *July*) as ye shall see by Barker's letter, and shall be to morn (*to-morrow*) at London, and with God's grace shall be relieved by the mean of the parliament; by Sunday ye shall have weeting.

[1] If myrr here signifies murrain, it must mean a consumption.

[2] John Clopton was sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk this year.

As for my master (*Sir J. Fastolf*), he departeth not to London till the next week after this, and he ride.

As for tidings be none truth, but Poynyngs is quit and delivered of all treasons; and Sir William Oldhall's process in the King's Bench (*is*) reversed; and the priest that accused Lords Cromwell,[1] Grey,[2] and my master[3] will confess who caused him to do it, so that he may have his life, &c.

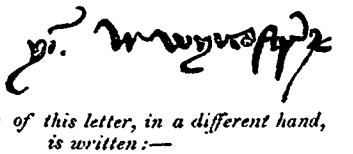
As soon as ye goodly may to see my master it shall be to him a singular pleasure. Sir, a bailiff of my master's is in Drayton. John Edmond brought a letter to you, and he sent me weeting he was shent (*blamed*) upon some matter, as he supposeth, contained in the latter. I pray you in right be his good master, and that I may weet the cause, for I doubt he shall and must obey if he hath offended.

At Caister the noneday,[4] 7th day (*of*) July.

Your

WILLIAM WORCESTER.

Caister,
Noneday,
7th July,
about 1457.
29 H. VI.



On the top of this letter, in a different hand, is written:—

Prove untruth in the undersheriff, or that he did otherwise than your counsel advised him, and Paston shall demean him accordingly.[5]

LETTER XLI.—(XXX. vol. iii. p. 133.)

This letter affords a curious instance of Sir John Fastolf's resolution in determining to attack a religious society in the courts of law, and that he should do so by the advice of his confessors appears very extraordinary; but I suppose they were seculars, and they had always a dislike to the regular clergy. [And it goes far to prove what we have suggested in a previous letter, that the law courts might be, and were, relied on for the attainment of justice, for otherwise the keen and worldly-prudent Sir J. Fastolf would have done much to avoid coming before such a court against such adversaries.]

To my trusty friend, Sir Thomas Howys, Parson of Castlecombe, being at Caister.

RIGHT trusty friend, I greet you well, and whereas the Bishop of Norwich[6] maketh but delays in my reasonable desire for an end to be had in the xxv marks (16*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) of Hickling, I am upon an appointment and thorough with the heir of Clifford that he shall enter in the whole manor that is chargeable with my xxv marks rent,[7] which the prior and convent have forfeited the said whole manor to the heirs under their convent seal of record, because of mine non-payment of xxv marks, and so then the prior shall lose for ever fourscore marks (53*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) of rent, and that without any conscience, for they have been false both to the Cliffords and to me this seven year day; and I trust to God to correct them so by spiritual law and temporal law, that all other religious shall take an example to break the covenant or will of any benefactor that advanceth them with lands, rents, or goods; and my confessors have exhorted me greatly thereto. And Almighty God keep you. Written at London the 23rd day of September, in the 30th year of King Henry VI.

JOHN FASTOLF, *Knight.*

London, Thursday,
23rd September, 1451, 30 H. VI.

[1] Henry Lord Cromwell.

[2] There were several Lords Grey at this time; which of them is the person here mentioned cannot now be ascertained.

[3] By J. Payn's letter (see letter xxx. p. 21) it appears that he was urged to have accused his master Sir J. Fastolf of treason.

[4] The day of the nones.

[5] This appears to have been written by some one whose advice had been asked in some law proceedings.

[6] Walter Lyhart, or Hart, became Bishop of Norwich in 1446, and died in 1472.

[7] The estate out of which this rent-charge of xxv marks had been reserved was settled on the Priory of Hickling by some of the family of Clifford. William Clifford, in 1419, assigned this rent-charge to Henry Barton; who, in 1428, assigned it to Sir John Fastolf, who was now going to convey it to a Clifford again. This priory was first founded in 1185, 31 H. II., and Roger Oakham was at this time prior, a most turbulent man, of whom Sir John Fastolf, in another letter to Sir Thomas Howys, dated 28th of June, 1451, 29 H. VI. says (speaking of giving money to religious houses), "The untrouthe of the priour of Hykelyng draweth away my devotion in such causes." [Nothing was more likely to draw away Fastolf's "devotion."]

There is one Walsham would desire acquittance of pardon for the widow of Heigham; I have no cause [*no reason why I should*], for her husband left her whereof to pay her debts sufficient, and for me he fares the better; the widow noiseth you, Sir Thomas, that ye sold a wey (*of*) salt but for 20*s.* that she might have had 40*s.* for every wey; I pray you answer that for your acquittal.

Item, send me the value of Cooke's[1] tenement in Drayton with twenty acres (*of*) land thereto, what it was worth yearly, when it stood whole, for Selling saith it was worth but one noble (6*s.* 8*d.*) by the year.

LETTER XLII.—(XIV. vol. i. p. 65.)

[THIS is the petition of Richard Duke of York to the king in 1451, when, on his return from Ireland, he withdrew into Wales, from whence it was forwarded. It is chiefly directed against the Duke of Somerset, but being a well-known historical document, we have omitted it here.]

LETTER XLIII.—(XXXI. vol. iii. p. 135.)

The whole of this familiar letter, wherein the writer mixes politics and pleasantry, is not entirely explicable; nor can the date be exactly ascertained: I have ventured to date it between 1450 and 1454.

To William Wayte.

RIGHT faithful and well-beloved brother William Wayte, I commend me to you, as the lord may to his tenant, praying you effectually *to* recommend me to my singular good master and yours, excusing me that I write not to him, for I dare not envolde (*involve*) me in the same; and as for tidings here, I certify you that all is nought or will be nought; the king borweth (*borroweth*) his expenses for Christmas; the King of Arragon, the Duke of Milan, the Duke of Ostrich [*Austria*], the Duke of Burgoyn (*Burgundy*) would have been assistant to us to make a conquest, and nothing is answered nor agreed in manner, save abiding the great deliberation that at the last shall spill [*spoil*] all together, &c.[2]

The chief justice[3] hath waited (*expected*) to have been assaulted all this sev'night nightly in his house, but nothing come as yet, the more pity, &c. An oyer and determiner[4] goeth into Kent, and commissioners my lord the Duke of York, Bourchier, my master, that will not come there de proditionibus, &c. but Kent prayeth them to hang no men when they come.

Other tidings as yet can I none tell you, save Ulveston is steward of the Middle Inn, and Isley of the Inner Inn, because they would *have offices* for excuse for dwelling this time from their wives, &c.[5] Sir Thomas Todenham lost his primer at the Tower-hill, and sent his man to seek it, and a good fellow wished it in Norfolk, so he would fetch it there, &c. Men ween that Norfolk men were hardier than they be.[6] God grant, and at the reverence of God help too, that an outas (*outcry*) and clamour be made upon the Lord Scales, praying him for weal of the country neither sustain nor help him nor Heydon in

[1] Sir John seems to think that Selling had undervalued the tenement, and twenty acres of land; he set it only at 4*d.* an acre yearly rent.

[2] The assistance offered by the princes here named related to our wars in France.

[3] John Hody was Chief Justice of the King's Bench, but I do not understand what is here related.

[4] By what is mentioned of the commissions going into Kent to try those guilty of treasons, &c. (if these were for that purpose), it appears as if it was not a great while after Cade's rebellion; and the Duke of York being one of the commissioners, must have been greatly in favour of the rebels, as his friends were said to have stirred up the insurrection.

[5] [This we suppose to be a lawyer's joke. It is, however, curious to observe that the difficulties of travel, the expense, and the want of proper accommodation, prevented the families and even the wives from accompanying their husbands to London, when the business of the latter called or kept them there.]

[6] It seems as if some robust exercises had been performed on Tower-hill wherein the Norfolk men did not exert themselves in a manner that was expected from them.

no wise, and that ye cry upon my master and yours that he obey not the certiorari as yet, as you may see by his letter from my master rudely and in haste by me endited, of which I pray excuse, &c. And pray Blake to do [*cause*] Swaffham men say somewhat to the matter. I weet well Todenham and Heydon will not come there at this time, as it is verily reported, &c. "Mitte sapientem, &c." Brayn and I shall be with you on Saturday next at even with the grace of Jesu, to whom I betake you. In haste at London the 2nd day of January. By J. BOCKING.[1]

London, 2 Jan.
between 1450 & 1454.
29 & 34 H. VI.

LETTER XLIV.—(XXXII. vol. iii. p. 139.)

I have given this letter to show the fairness and moderation of a nobleman, in an age when the great men used to tyrannise almost with uncontrolled power over their inferiors. It does the Earl credit as a man, and makes us lament his untimely death, being brought to the block in 1461 for his loyalty to his unfortunate sovereign. [It certainly does not evince any desire to use undue influence, but it displays little of the possession of the "almost uncontrolled power" attributed to him by Fenn.]

To my right trusty and right well-beloved John Paston.

RIGHT trusty and right well-beloved, I greet you well, and I am informed that William Mathew of Norwich, butcher, hath brought an action of debt against Nicholas Hart, a tenant of mine, bearer hereof, and hath supposed by his action that my said tenant should owe him seventy shillings for his hire of time that he should have been servant to my said tenant; where *(as)* it is said to me for truth that he was apprentice to my said tenant, and never otherwise withheld but as apprentice, and oweth no money to have of him. I send to you my said tenant to give you clear information of the matter, and I pray you that ye will call the jury before you that are impannelled between them, and open *(to)* them the matter at large at mine instance, and desire them to do as conscience will, and to eschew perjury; and the Trinity keep you. If ye take the matter in rule, I pray thereof, and will be content. Written at Wivenhoe the 28th day of December.

The EARL of OXFORD.

Wivenhoe in Essex, 28 Dec.
most probably written
between 1450 & 1455.
29 & 34 H. VI.

LETTER XLV.—(XXXIII. vol. iii. p. 141.)

It appears from this letter that small houses were sometimes framed and made ready on the spot where the wood was felled; some dispute seems to have arisen here, and the owner or occupier of the wood refused his consent to the carrying away of the timber-work after it had been made ready to set up.

To my well-beloved brother, John Paston, Esq.

BROTHER Paston, I recommend me unto you, praying you that ye take the labour to speak with Thomas Ratcliff of Framsden *(in Suffolk)* for the deliverance of part of an house which lyeth in his wood at Framsden, which house the owner hath carried part thereof to Orford, which, so departed, the remanent, that remaineth there in his wood, shall do him little good, and it shall hurt greatly the workmen and the owner thereof also, which is my tenant, and the house should be set upon ground.

I write unto you in this behalf, because I understand he will be much advised by you, and if he do anything at my request I shall do as much that shall please him; and also the poor man shall give him two nobles, or twenty shillings rather than fail; I pray you be as good a mean for him as ye may in this behalf as my very trust is in you, and I shall

[1] J. Bocking was one in the household of Sir John Fastolf.

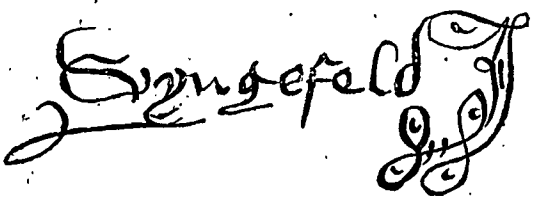
be ready at all times to do that may be to your pleasure, I trust to Jesu, who have you in his keeping, and send you joy of all your ladies.[1]

Written at Lethreringham, this Tuesday in Whitsun week.

Your brother and friend,

J. WYNGFIELD.[2]

Tuesday, May or June,
between 1450 and 1460.
28 & 38 H. VI.



LETTER XLVI.—(XXXIV. vol. iii. p. 145.)

I have given this letter as showing the method of educating young women of some family, but of small fortune, by placing them in the families of the gentry, &c. It is plain, from Sir John's desiring that Margaret Paston would take her for a time as a boarder, that the young person was not to have been in the line of a common servant. He likewise shows a propriety of conduct in not taking her himself, as he was a widower; at the same time acknowledging that, had he had a wife, he should have found no difficulty in providing properly for her in his own family. Sir John Heveningham married Elizabeth, the daughter and heir of Sir John Reddisham, knight, and he was living in 1459.

To my right worshipful cousin, Margaret Paston, be this letter delivered.

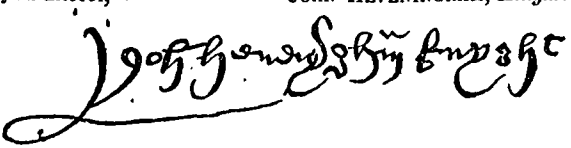
RIGHT worshipful and well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you as heartily as I can, thanking you of your good cheer the last time I was with you. And, worshipful cousin, please it you to call unto your remembrance, I wrote unto you for my cousin Anneys Loveday to have been in your service, and I received from you a letter that your will was good, but durst not to into the time ye had spoke with my cousin your husband.

Worshipful cousin, I have laboured for her in other places, but I cannot have mine intent as yet, wherefore if that it please you to have her with you to into the time that a mistress may be purveyed for her, I pray you thereof, and I shall content you for her board that ye shall be well pleased; for, cousin, and (*if*) I had a wife, I would not care [*be uneasy*] for her; and there as she is she is not well at her ease, for she is at Robert Lethum's, and therefore I pray you heartily that ye will tender this my writing, and I beseech you that in case be that ye will fulfil it, that ye will send my cousin William Staunton for her, and I shall keep you true promise as I have before written; and I beseech Almighty Jesu preserve you. Written at Heveningham on the 7th day of May, &c.,

Your own cousin,

JOHN HEVENINGHAM, *Knight*.

Heveningham, 7th May,
between 1450 and 1460.
28 and 38 H. VI.



[1] What is meant by this expression, "sende yo' joy of all yor ladyes," I do not understand, unless it should have been meant to signify, send you all the joys of our Lady. [There is little doubt that it means the ladies of his family. Letter xxxix. mentions a daughter as unwell.]

[2] Sir John Wyngfield, the writer of this letter, was a knight of that very ancient family of Wingfield Castle, in Suffolk. He was now seated at Lethering-ham, and, I believe, married Margaret daughter of Sir Hugh Hastings, of Elsing in Norfolk. His signature is very particular, the initial J of his Christian name being placed at the end of his surname.

LETTER XLVII.—(XXXV. vol. iii. p. 147.)

The writer of this letter might be sister (or daughter) of John Crane, the gentleman whose signature is to Letter xxviii., p. 20. The date must remain quite uncertain between the years 1450 and 1460, which indeed is totally immaterial, as the letter is given merely to show that young women of good families were brought up as attendants upon ladies of rank, and served them, not only in the capacity of the modern "lady's woman," but were taught all kinds of needleworks, pastry, cookery, &c., thus qualifying them to become good mothers, frugal housewives, and useful members of the community.

To my cousin, Margaret Paston, be this letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful cousin, I recommend me unto you, desiring to hear of your welfare; and if it like you to hear of my welfare, at the making of this letter I was in good hele, loved be God. The cause of my writing to you at this time is this, praying you to send me word of your welfare, and how ye do of your sickness, and if the medicine do you any good that I sent you writing of last; thanking you of the great friendship that ye have done to my mother with all my heart.

Also I pray you that ye will be good mean to my cousin your husband, that he will see that my father be well ruled in his livelihood for his worship and his profit.

Also praying you to hold me excused that I have written no oftener to you, for, in good faith, I had no leisure, for my lady hath been sick at London near hand this quarter of this year, and that hath been great heaviness to me; but now, blessed be God, she is amended, and is in the country again.

Also thanking you of the great cheer that I had of you when I was with you last with all my heart, praying you of good continuance, for I had never greater need than I have now, and if I had leisure and space I would write to you the cause.

No more at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Windsor, the 29th day of June.

Also, cousin, I pray you to send me some Norfolk thread to do about my neck,[1] to ride with.

By your poor beadswoman and cousin,

ALICE CRANE.

Windsor, 29th June, between 1450 and 1460. 29 and 39 H. VI.

Alice Crane

LETTER XLVIII.—(XXXVI. vol. iii. p. 151.)

We see here a terrible instance of the ungovernable spirit of a multitude raised against the chief officer of the county for a supposed offence, for it does not appear that the sheriff had secreted or delayed the writ; if he had done so, it is a treatment he might have expected in such unsettled and sanguinary times. Even in this modern age of refinement, we see election disputes conducted with an animosity, by the friends of the different candidates, which in their cool and dispassionate moments they are themselves shocked at and ashamed of. [Sir John is rather too earnest about an election row. The delay of a writ of election is not a trifle, and the sheriff's answer, he "wist not who had it," rather implies that some one had it; nevertheless the tumult went not beyond noise, the house is not forced, and nothing "sanguinary" appears to have happened. The contemplated deputation to the king, of "an hundred or two hundred of the thriftiest men," was, probably, on the part of the corporation, to absolve themselves from any fault in this insult to the sheriff.]

To my right reverend and most worshipful master, my master, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful and my most reverend master, I recommend me unto your good mastership; like you to weet that on Childermas day[2] there were much people at Norwich at the shire (*the county court*), because it was noised in the shire that the under-sheriff had a writ to make a new election, wherefore the people was grieved because they had laboured so often, saying to the sheriff that he had the writ, and plainly he should not away unto the time the writ were read. The sheriff answered and said

[1] Something like a modern tippet seems meant, to be put about her neck as part of her riding-dress.

[2] Childermas day is the 28th of December, and the day of the week on which it fell was reckoned an unfortunate day throughout the following year to begin any undertaking, &c. The same superstition at this time reigns in many places, and amongst many persons even above the vulgar.

that he had no writ, nor wist who had it: hereupon the people peaced (*became peaceable*), and stilled unto the time the shire was done, and after that done, the people called upon him, "kill him, head him," and so John Damme, with help of others, gat him out of the shire-house, and with much labour brought him into Spurrier Row,[1] and there the people met against him, and so they avoided [*withdrew*] him into an house, and kept fast the door unto the time the mayor was sent for, and the sheriff,[2] to strengthen him, and to convey him away, or else he had been slain; wherefore divers of the thrifty men came to me, desiring that I should write unto your mastership to let you have understanding of the guiding of the people, for they be full sorry of this trouble; and that it please you to send them your advice how they shall be guided and ruled, for they were purposed to have gathered an hundred or two hundred of the thriftiest men, and to have come up to the king to let the king have understanding of their mocking.

And also the people fear them sore of you, and of Master Berney, because ye come not home.

Please you that ye remember the bill I sent you at Hallowmas for the place and lands at Beighton which Cheeseman had in his farm for five marks (*3l. 6s. 8d.*); there will no man have it above forty-six shillings and eight pence, for Alblaster and I have done as much thereto as we can, but we cannot go above that, and yet we cannot let it so for this year without they have it for five or six years;[3] I wrote to your mastership hereof but I had none answer, wherefore I beseech you that I may have answer of this by twelfth (*6 January*) for and (*if*) we have an answer of this by that time we shall enfeoff him with all, &c.

My right worshipful and my most reverend master, Almighty Jesu preserve you and send you the victory of your enemies, as I trust to Almighty Jesu ye shall.

Written at Norwich on St. Thomas's Day after Christmas Day.

Your poor servant and beadsman,

RICHARD CALLE.[4]

Norwich,
St. Thomas Becket,
29th Dec. between 1450 and 1460.
29 and 39 H. VI.

LETTER XLIX.—(XXXVII. vol. iii. p. 155.)

This letter, from a favourer of the Duke of York's interest, must have been written between the years 1451 and 1456, at such time as the king was under the direction and guidance of the Yorkists, as it affords us a variety of directions relative to their proceedings, and for their acquiring friends in the House of Commons. Sir William Oldhall was Speaker of that House in 1451 and 1452, but it does not appear that he was so at the time this letter was written, though, from his being so particularly mentioned, if not Speaker, he was certainly a man of weight and consequence there. J. Paston also seems to have been a man of much consideration and interest in the county of Norfolk, from the requests here made to him, and the instructions given him. [The directions here given for getting up a political "agitation," and for conducting an election, are amusing from their resemblance to more modern efforts for similar ends; and instructive, as showing the weight and importance which even thus early was due to the expression of public opinion. The letter is no doubt from a strong political partisan, and the opinions of, and expressions applied to, his opponents (for instance, that Lord Molyn's adherents are beasts) exaggerated, yet from previous letters, where we see complaints of Heydon, Todenham, &c., it is clear that the "agitation," though perhaps unduly excited, was not unfounded.]

To my master, John Paston, in right great haste.

SIR, and it please, I was in my Lord of York's house, and I heard much thing more than my master writeth unto you of; I heard much thing in Fleet-street; but, Sir, my

[1] Spurrier Row was what is now called the White Lyon Lane, and leads from the castle ditches to the market-place: it took its name from the shops of those who sold saddles, bridles, spurs, &c. &c.

[2] [It was the under-sheriff who was attacked, although he is here sometimes styled the sheriff.]

[3] It appears by this that the rents of lands were at this time declining, owing most probably to the unsettled state of the nation. [Farmers were then evidently aware of the value of a fixed term, and, though rents were declining, would not take a farm at a reduced rent, except under a lease for five or six years.]

[4] [He afterwards married Margery, the daughter of J. Paston. The date of this letter is uncertain, but most probably towards the latter part of the reign of Henry VI.]

lord was with the king, and he visaged so the matter that all the king's household was, and is, afraid right sore; and my said lord hath put a bill to the king, and desired much thing which is much after the commons' desire, and all is upon justice, and to put all those that be indicted under arrest, without surety or mainprise, and to be tried by law as law will, insomuch that on Monday Sir William Oldhall was with the king at Westminster more than two hours, and had of the king good cheer; and the king desired of Sir William Oldhall that he should speak to his cousin York that he would be good lord to John Penycock, and that my Lord of York should write unto his tenants that they should suffer Penycock's officers (*to*) go and gather up his rent-farms within the said Duke's lordships; and Sir William Oldhall answered again to the king, and prayed him to hold my lord excused, for though my lord wrote under his seal of his arms, his tenants will not obey it, insomuch (*that*) when Sir Thomas Hoe met with my Lord of York beyond Saint Alban's the western men fell upon him and would have slain him, had (*not*) Sir William Oldhall abeen [*been there*], and therefore would the western men have fallen upon the said Sir William and have killed him, and so he told the king.

Sir Borle Yonge and Josse labour sore for Heydon and Todenham to Sir William Oldhall, and proffer more than two thousand pounds for to have his good lordship, and therefore it is none other remedy but let Swaffham men be warned to meet with my said lord on Friday next coming at Pickenham on horseback in the most goodly wise, and put some bill unto my lord of Sir Thomas Todenham, Heydon, and Prentice, and cry out on them, and that all the women of the same town be there also, and cry out on them also, and call them extortioners, and pray my lord that he will do sharp execution upon them. And my master counsels you that ye should move the mayor and all the aldermen with all their commoners to ride against (*to meet*)[1] my lord, and that there be made bills, and put them up to my lord, and let all the town cry out on Heydon, Todenham, Wyndham, and Prentice, and of all their false maintainers, and tell my lord how much hurt they have done to the city, and let it be done in the most lamentable wise, for, Sir, but if (*unless*) my lord hear some foul tales of them, and some hideous noise and cry, by my faith they are else like to come to grace, and therefore, Sir, remember you of all these matters.

Sir, also I spake with William Norwich, and asked him after the Lord Molyns how he stood to my lord ward, and he told me he was sore out of grace, and that my Lord of York loveth him nought; William Norwich told me that he durst undertake for to bring you unto my lord, and make him your right good lord; and, Sir, my master counselled you that ye should not spare, but get you his good lordship.

Sir, beware of Heydon, for he would (*have*) destroyed you by my faith.

The Lord Scales and Sir William Oldhall are made friends.

Sir, labour ye for (*to*) be knight of the shire, and speak to my master Stapleton also that he be it; Sir, all Swaffham, and (*if*) they be warned, will give you their voices; Sir, speak with Thomas Denys and take his good advice therein; Sir, speak to Denys that he avoid [*withdraw*] his garrison at Reydon, for there is none other remedy but death for Daniel, and for all those that are indicted; Sir, labour ye to the mayor that John Dam[2] or William Jenney be burgess for the city of Norwich, tell them that he may be it as well as Yonge is of Bristol, or the Recorder is of London, and as the Recorder of Coventry is for the city of Coventry; and it (*is*) so in many places in England. Also, Sir, think on Yarmouth that ye ordain that John Jenney, or Lomnor, or some good man be burgess for Yarmouth; ordain ye that Jenneys may be in the parliament for they can say well.

Sir, it were wisdom that my Lord of Oxford wait on my Lord of York; in good faith, good Sir, think on all these matters; much more I had to write unto you if I

[1] [More correctly *towards*.]

[2] [The name of this Norfolk family is generally spelt Damme; but the orthography of names was at this time, and indeed long after, very unsettled.]

could have remembered me, but I had no leisure by my faith; hold me excused of my lewd rude writing; let John Dam beware for the Lord Molyns; and, Sir, let the city beware for he will do them a villainy but if (*unless*) he may have his men; and, Sir, if he come to Norwich, look there be ready to wait upon the mayor a good fellowship, for it is said here that they are but beasts.

Sir, my master bade me write unto you that ye should stir the mayor and all the aldermen to cry on my lord that they may have justice of these men that be indicted, and that my lord will speak unto the king thereof; and, Sir, in divers parts in the town there (*where*) my lord cometh, there would be ordained many portions (*parties*) of commoners to cry on my lord for justice of these men that are indicted, and tell their names, in special Todenham, Heydon, Wyndham, (*and*) Prentice. Sir, I send you a copy of the bill that my Lord of York put unto the king; and, Sir, let copies go about the city enough, for the love of God, which have you in his keeping. Written on Saint Faith's day in haste.

By your servant, WILLIAM WAYTE.

6th of October,
between 1451 and 1456.
30 and 35 H. VI.

LETTER L.—(XXXVIII. vol. iii. p. 163.)

On the back of this letter is written, "It appereth by this lrē that Sir Jo. Fastolf was of kynred to John Paston ār." The date of this letter cannot be ascertained farther than that it was written between 1444, when Sir William Paston died, and 1459, the year in which Sir John Fastolf deceased. It contains nothing material, but I think it throws light upon the character of Agnes Paston, showing her in the light of one who was ever attentive to her family and her fortunes, and interested herself in having a proper provision made for her younger children. We shall see that the Duke of Norfolk afterwards claimed Caister, and laid a regular siege to it. The Lady Boys mentioned in this letter was Sibilla, widow of Sir Roger Boys, of Honing; she was living in 1460.

This letter be delivered to John Paston, being at London, in the Inner Inn of the Temple.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine; and as touching the matter which ye desired my cousin Clere should write for, she hath done, and I send you the copy closed in this letter. As for the inquiry, I have sent by Pynchemore to inquire, and sent mine own man to William Bacton, and done him inquire in divers places, and I can hear no word of none such inquirance, I wot not what it meaneth. Robert Hill was at Paston this week, and the man that dwelled in Bowers Place is out thereof, and said to Robert he durst no longer abide therein, for Waryn Herman sayeth to him it is his place. As for Coket's matter, my daughter your wife told me yester even the man that sueth him will now stand to your award.

Bartholomew White is condemned in Forncet court in 40 marks (26*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) as it is said.

Item, as for Talfas, the sheriffs have behest to do all the favour they may; I sent the parson of St. Edmund's to Gilbert, and he said there was come a new writ for to have him up by the 15th day of Saint Martin, and how Caly had been at them,[1] and desired to carry up Talfas on his own cost, and give him good wages.

Item, John Osbern said to me this day that he supposed they will not have him up before Easter, and Margaret Talfas said to me the same day, that men told her that he should never have end till he were at London, and asked me counsel whether she might give the sheriffs silver or none; and I told her if she did, I supposed she should find them the more friendly.

Item, as for Orwellbury, I send you a bill of all the receipts since the death of your father, and a copy written on the back how your father let it to farm to the said Gurney; I would ye should write (*to*) Gurney, and charge him to meet with you from Londonward, and at the least way let him purvey ten pounds, for (*he*) oweth by my reckoning at Michaelmas last past, beside your father's

[1] [Fenn translates *this home*.]

debt, 18*l.* 14*s.* 8*d.*; if ye would write to him to bring surety both for your father's debt and mine, and pay by days,[1] so that the man might live and pay us, I would forgive him of the old arrearages ten pounds; and (*if*) he might be made to pay 20 marks, (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) by year, on that condition I would forgive him ten pounds,[2] and so thinketh me he should have cause to pray for your father and me, and was it let [*and that it was let*] in my father's time. I feel by Robert, his wife is right loth to go thence, she said that she had lever (*rather*) I should have all her goods after her day than they should go out thereof.

Item, John Dam told me that the Lady Boys will sell a place called Hales, but he saith she speaketh it privily and saith it is not tayled (*entailed*), as John Dam knoweth, which will she hath said as largely of other things that hath not been so.

Item, he told me as he heard said, Sir John Fastolf hath sold Hellesdon to Boleyn of London, and if it be so it seemeth he will sell more, wherefore I pray you, as ye will have my love and my blessing, that ye will help and do your devoir that some thing were purchased for your two brethren; I suppose that Sir John Fastolf, and (*if*) he were spoke to, would be gladder to let his kinsmen have part than strange men; assay him in my name of such places as ye suppose is most clear.

It is said in this country that my Lord of Norfolk saith Sir John Fastolf hath given him Caister, and he will have (*it*) plainly. I send you a bill of Osbern's hand, which was the answer of the sheriff and John of Dam.

John, bring me my letter home with you, and my cousin Clere's copy of her letter, and the copy of the receipt of Orwellbury, and recommend me to Lomner, and tell him his best beloved fareth well, but she is not yet come to Norwich, for they die yet, but not so sore as they did, and God be with you.[3] Written at Norwich, in right great haste, the 16th day of November.

By your mother,

AGNES PASTON.

Norwich, 16th of November,
between 1444 and 1459.
23 and 38 H. VI.

LETTER LI.—(XV. vol. i. p. 69.)

Margaret of Anjou, Queen of Henry VI. alarmed at the report of the approach of Edward Earl of March (son to the Duke of York) towards London with a great power, endeavoured to make what friends she could; and amongst other places, on her journey for that purpose, visited Norwich; Edmund de Hadham, and Jasper of Hatfield, the king's half-brothers, attending her. Her familiarity and obliging address pleased the gentry, and shows that she understood the art of conciliating the goodwill of those with whom she conversed.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, praying you to weet, &c. (*here follow some account of money received, &c.*)

As for tidings, the queen came into this town on Tuesday[4] last past after noon, and abode here till it was Thursday three (*o'clock*) afternoon; and she sent after my cousin Elizabeth Clere[5] by Sharinborn to come to her; and she durst not disobey her commandment, and came to her; and when she came in the queen's presence, the queen made right much of her, and desired her to have an husband, the which ye shall know of hereafter; but as for that he is never nearer than he was before; the queen was right well pleased with her answer, and reporteth of her in the best wise, and saith, by her truth, she saw no gentlewoman since she came into Norfolk that she liked better than she doth her.

Blake, the bailey of Swaffham, was here with the king's brother,[6] and he came to me, weening that ye had been at home; and said that the king's brother desired him that he should pray you in his name to come to him,

[1] [Fixed terms.]
[2] [That is, other ten pounds of her own debt.]
[3] [This must refer to some pestilence or epidemic disease, but we find no other mention of it. Probably some local fever.]

[4] Tuesday, 18th of April. Thursday 20th of April.
[5] Daughter of Robert Clere, Esq., of Ormesby.
[6] Either Edmund, afterwards Earl of Richmond, father to Henry VII., or Jasper, Earl of Pembroke.

for he would right fain that ye had come to him if ye had been at home; and he told me that he wist well that he should send for you when he came to London, both for Cossey and other things.

I pray you that ye will do your cost on me against Whitsuntide, that I may have something for my neck. When the queen was here, I borrowed my cousin Elizabeth Clere's device,[1] for I durst not for shame go with my beads[2] amongst so many fresh[3] gentlewomen as here were at that time.

The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written at Norwich on the Friday next before St. George.

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Friday.
21st of April, 1452. 30 H. VI.

LETTER LII.—(XXXIX. vol. iii. p. 169.)

I have copied this letter as containing a recipe against bad air; but whether or not cardamoms are meant I cannot tell, they are said to be warm and attenuating, and to comfort the head and stomach, and, therefore, I should suppose, proper to be taken in a morning as a preservative against the effects of bad air. The fair leaves of artichokes, when blanched and rendered less bitter, are likewise called chards; these as being flat, might be kept in a book, and in that state brought from foreign parts ready for use, as we had no artichokes till long after this time in England. These were accounted very wholesome; it is probable, therefore, that these are the things mentioned. [The complaint of the air of Norwich is also something remarkable, but probably means no more than the effect of a crowded city upon a person accustomed to the open air of the country. It is also a curious fact that two dozen wooden trenchers could not be procured in so large and commercial a town, but had to be sent for from London.] Margaret Paston's uncle, Philip Berney, died in 1453, therefore this letter must be written about that time.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I commend me to you, I pray you that ye will do buy two dozen trenchers, for I can none get in this town; also I pray you that ye will send me a book with chardeqweyns that I may have of in the morning, for the air be not wholesome in this town, therefore I pray you heartily let John Suffield bring it home with him.

No more, but the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters. Written on St. Leonard's even.

My uncle Philip commends him to you, and he hath been so sick since that I came to Reedham, that I wend [*weened—thought*] he should never have escaped it, nor not[4] is like to do but if (*unless*) he have ready help, and therefore he shall into Suffolk this next week, to mine aunt, for there is a good physician, and he shall look to him.

My Lady Hastyngs told me that Heydon hath spoken to Jeffrey Boleyn of London, and is agreed with him that he should bargain with Sir John Fastolf to buy the manor if Blickling as it were for himself, and if Boleyn buy it in truth Heydon shall have it.

I came to Norwich on Soulmass day (*2nd of November*).

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Sunday, 5th of November,
1452. 32 H. VI.

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[1] A device, or ornament for the neck.

[2] Necklaces of beads, &c., appear to have been worn at this time, though she either did not think her's handsome or fashionable enough to be put on upon this occasion.

[3] May not the word *fresch* mean French or foreign gentlewomen attendant on the queen? though it most probably means fresh, gay, or well-dressed or fashionable ladies. [We do not see why so far-fetched a meaning should be sought,—fresh is new, and among so many new acquaintance, she was ashamed to appear without fitting dress and ornaments.]

[4] [That is—nor is not like, &c.]

LETTER LIII.—(XL. vol. iii. p. 171.)

The conversation in this letter must refer to some offer of marriage made to his sister Elizabeth Paston, who afterwards married Robert Poynings; and I should suppose the letter to have been written in January 1452-3, from the request in it for him to buy his wife some ornament for her neck, as the same petition had been made in a previous letter (li.), which was dated April, 1452, and probably not yet complied with.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; praying you to weet that I spake yesterday with my sister, and she told me that she was sorry that she might not speak with you ere ye yede (*went*); and she desireth, if it pleased you, that ye should give the gentleman that ye know of such language as he might feel by you that ye will be well willing to the matter that ye know of; for she told me that he hath said before this time that he conceived that ye have set but little thereby; wherefore she prayeth you that ye will be her good brother, and that ye might have a full answer at this time whether it shall be yea or nay; for her mother hath said to her syth (*since*) that ye ridden hence, that she hath no fantasy [*belief*] therein, but that it shall come to a jape (*come to nothing*); and saith to her that there is good craft in daubing; and hath such language to her that she thinketh right strange, and so that she is right weary thereof; wherefore she desireth the rather to have a full conclusion therein. She saith her full trust is in you, and as ye do therein she will agree her thereto.

Master Brackley[1] was here yesterday to have spoken with you; I spake with him, but he would not tell me what his errand was.

It is said here that the sessions shall be at Thetford on Saturday next coming, and there shall be my Lord of Norfolk and others with great people, as it is said. Other tidings have we none yet.

The blissful Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich on the Tuesday next before Candlemass.

I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to remember to purvey a thing for my neck, and to do make (*have made*) my girdle.

Yours, MARGARET PASTON.

My cousin Crane recommendeth her to you, and prayeth you to remember her matter, &c., for she may not sleep on nights for him.[2]

Norwich, Tuesday, 30th of January,
1452-3. 31 H. VI.

LETTER LIV.—(XLI. vol. iii. p. 175.)

I have given this curious letter as a specimen of the outrages committed by the great upon respectable gentlemen; for though the writer has put no name to his letter, he appears to have been a man of property, and of some consequence, and most probably had married an heiress of fortune, as he mentions his wife's place in Norwich. There being an act of parliament passed, shows that he was a man of some consideration. At this time the most arbitrary methods were used to obtain the possession of estates, and entries were made in the most forcible manner; though perhaps in this case there might be some proper reasons for these proceedings under the direction of the Cardinal and Lord Oxford. His wife's daughter was also most probably an heiress, of whom Ingham had obtained the wardship, by which means he would demand a sum of money on her marriage. The Inghams were a most ancient and knightly family, situated at Ingham, in Norfolk, of which the male line in the capital branch had failed in 1344: this person was therefore some collateral issue. The cardinal here mentioned must have been John Kemp, first Bishop of Rochester, next of Chichester, then of London, from which see he was removed to York, and in 1452 became Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1439 he was made Cardinal of St. Balbine, and a short time before his death was removed to the cardinalship of St. Rufino: these various preferments were briefly recorded in the following line:—

"Bis Primas, ter Præses, et bis Cardine functus."

[1] John Bracklee or Brackley, was a brother of the Convent of Grey Friars, or Friars Minors, in Norwich; he took a Doctor of Divinity's degree, and was a famous preacher.

[2] Who the gentleman was, or what the important matter could be, which prevented her cousin Crane from sleeping, must be left in doubt, unless some of my fair readers, who shall do me the honour to peruse these letters, may have penetration enough to discover either the one or the other.

He died very old, and very rich, in the beginning of the year 1453, and was buried in his own cathedral. John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, was beheaded in 1461, 1 E. IV. The conclusion of this letter conveys an insinuation that the king was improperly fettered by the ruling of this archbishop. [Notwithstanding all Sir John's assertions about "outrages," and "arbitrary" methods, there appears nothing in this letter but what might be related now by a chancery suitor. Of the justice or injustice of the case we of course know nothing; but the arresting of a surety for a debt, which had been paid by the principal, might have happened till the recent abrogation of arrest upon *mesne process*; and the committal of a lady to the Fleet for contempt is no uncommon Chancery process: in this case also the warden of the Fleet is stated to have conducted himself with humanity and proper feeling.]

To my right worshipful master, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful and mine especial good master, I recommend me to you with all service and prayer to my power, and like it you to weet that how be[1] a full strange act is passed against me in the Higher House before the Lords, whereof I send you a copy; nevertheless I hope to God that it shall not pass in the Common House; but me is befallen the most sorrowful infortune that ever poor man had, standing in such case as I do; for my lords the cardinal and of Oxford have imprisoned my wife in the Counter, and how they shall guide her forth God knoweth, which standeth too nigh mine heart, if God's will were, but well I know that by these vengeable malices done to her and me they will (*not q?*) be content, for Ingham lithe (*lieth*) beside that to take away my wife's daughter out of Westminster, to make an end of my wife if he can, and also to arrest my servants, that I dread that she nor I shall have no creature to attend us nor help us; and such malice have I never heard of herebefore; and it is told me that, beside that, they will despoil, if any good they can find of mine, in Norwich or Norfolk, and imprison my servants there; wherefore I lowly beseech your mastership for our Lord's mercy that ye vouchsafe to succour them in this necessity; and, if any entry be made or should be made upon my wife's place in Norwich, that ye vouchsafe to succour my servants, and do therein after your wisdom for Christ's love and Saint Charity.

Beside this, a friend and kinsman of mine, one Robert Clement of Beetley, hath written to me that he is arrested and like to be imprisoned by a writ of debt, taken against him upon an obligation of an hundred pounds, in which he and I and others were bound to my Lord of Oxford fourteen years ago, whereof I have many acquittances. Wherefore I pray your good mastership to send to the sheriff that my said kinsman may be eased, and no return made against him, but that he may answer the next time by attorney, for truly that writ was taken out in the end of the term after I was arrested, and after it was appeared to.

I pray your mastership for God's sake to be not displeased nor weary to do for me in these matters of your charity, for I had lever (*rather*) give the said Robert such good, little if it be, as I have, than he were undone for me, or any man else that ever did for me; and I hope if God vouchsafe that the matter may come to reason, to save him harmless, and all other with God's mercy, ever praying you of your mastership and succour for God's love, who ever keep you for his mercy.

Written in Fleet, the Wednesday the second week of Lent. Moreover in augmenting of my sorrow, I weened my wife should have died since, for after she was arrested she laboured of her child that she is withall, waiting either to die or be delivered, and she hath not gone eight weeks quick; what shall befall Almighty God knoweth, and shall dispose mercifully.

Afterward my wife was some deal (*somewhat*) eased by the labour of the warden of Fleet, for the cursed cardinal had sent her to Newgate, God forgive his soul! now she is taken to bail till Tuesday. The cardinal is dead, and the king is relieved.

The Fleet, Wednesday,
21st of February, 1452-3.
31 H. VI.

[1] [*How be*—that is however it be—from whatever cause it may be. The style of this letter is frequently obscure. A few lines farther on we have, "but me is befallen"—*i. e.* but *to* me.]

LETTER LV.—(XVI. vol. i. p. 73.)

This letter is given, not only as containing some state anecdotes, but as exhibiting a character of John Paston, Esq. from Thomas Billing, who in 1453 was created a Serjeant at Law, and in 1458 appointed King's Serjeant. He became Chief Justice of England, in 1472.

To his worshipful brother, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful brother, I recommend (*me*) to you; and as for tidings, my Lord of York[1] hath taken my Lord of Exeter[2] into his award; the Duke of Somerset[3] is still in prison, in worse case than he was.

Sir John Fastolf recommends him to you, &c., he will ride into Norfolk ward as on Thursday, and he will dwell at Caister, and Scroop with him: he saith ye are the heartiest kinsman and friend that he knoweth, he would have you at Mauteby dwelling.

I had great cheer of Billing by the way, and he told me, in counsel, what he said to Ledam.

Ledam would have done his wise (*endeavour*) to have made a complaint to Pryothe in the shire house of you, and Billing counselled him to leave, and told Ledam, ye and he were no fellows, and said to Ledam "it is the guise of your countrymen to spend all the goods they have on men and livery gowns, and horse and harness, and so bear it out for a while, and at the last they are but beggars; and so will ye do: I would ye should do well, because ye are a fellow of Gray's Inn, where I was a fellow.

"As for Paston, he is an esquire of worship, and of great livelyhood, and I wot he will not spend all his goods at once, but he spareth yearly an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) or an hundred pounds: he may do his enemy a shrewd turn and never fare the worse in his household, nor (*have*) the less men about him.

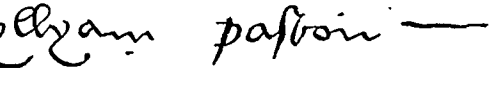
"Ye may not do so, but if it be for one season, I counsel you not to continue long as ye do. I would counsel you to seek rest with Paston."

And I thanked Billing on your behalf. God have you in his keeping.

By your poor brother,
WILLIAM PASTON.[4]

Much other thing I can tell you, and I had leisure; recommend me to my sister Margaret, and my cousin Elizabeth Clere, I pray you.

1452, or 1453, 31 or 32 H. VI.



LETTER LVI.—(XLII. vol. iii. p. 179.)

On the margin of this letter, towards the bottom, in a hand nearly coeval with the letter itself, is written "M^d. q^d. dict. lrē dnor' direct. Archiepcō Cant. est ap^d."—The paper is then unfortunately torn off, so that what followed is missing. Enough, however, remains to inform us that the letter to the archbishop was from the lords—that is, I presume, from the Duke of York and the lords in his party; and was, I suppose, a counterpart of what is contained in this letter, which appears to have been a copy of that sent to the king, and sent by some friend of J. Paston's to him, and which, by the words of the direction "Vadatur J. P." seems to have been sent to him under a solemn promise to be delivered. As several petitions and remonstrances were sent from the Duke of York and his party during these civil contests to the king, the exact date of this cannot be ascertained, though it was probably during the chancellorship of John Kemp, Archbishop of Canterbury, between the years 1452 and 1454. The address of this letter beginning with "Moste Cristen Kyng" is very particular; nor do I remember ever before to have seen the words "Magestee Royall," so early used in an address to the sovereign; it is well drawn up, and the purport of it is loyal and manly; it seems too to have been sent at a time when they supposed themselves sure of assistance, if we advert to the

[1] Richard Duke of York.
[2] Henry Holland Duke of Exeter.
[3] Edmund Beaufort Duke of Somerset, was imprisoned by the Duke of York's party in 1452, and again, for a considerable time, in 1453.
[4] A younger son of Sir William Paston.

steadiness of the concluding words:—"Whereynne we wolle persever wyth the gr'ce of our lorde." By sending a duplicate to the king they seemed to doubt whether or no the Archbishop would inform his highness of their letter addressed to him as Lord Chancellor.

Vadatur, J. P.

MOST Christian king, right high and mighty prince, and our most redoubted sovereign lord, we recommend us as humbly as we suffice unto your high excellence, whereunto please it to weet that for so much as we hear and understand, to our greatest sorrow earthly, that our enemies of approved experience, such as abide and keep themselves under the wing of your majesty royal, have thrown unto the same right studiously and right fraudulently many ambiguities and doubts of the faith-legiance, and duty, that, God knoweth, we bear unto your highness, and have put them in as great devoir as they could to enstrange us from your most noble presence, and from the favour of your good grace; which good grace to us is, and ought to be, our singular and most desired joy and consolation. We at this time be coming with grace, as your true and humble liege men, toward your said high excellence, to declare, and show thereto at large, our said faith and legiance, intending, with the mercy of Jesu in the said coming, to put us in as diligent and hearty devoir and duty as any your liege men alive to that at [*that*][1] may avance (*advance*) or prefer the honour and welfare of the said majesty royal and the surety of the said most notable person, the which (*we*) beseech our blessed Creator to prosper (*with*) as great honour, joy, and felicity as ever had any prince earthly, and to your said highness so to take, accept, and repute us, and not to please to give trust or confidence unto the sinister, malicious, and fraudulent labours and reports of our said enemies unto our coming to your said most noble presence, whereunto we beseech humbly that we may be admitted as your liege men, to the intent to show us the same, whereof yesterday we wrote our letters of our intent, to the right reverend father in God, the Archbishop of Canterbury, your Chancellor of England, to be showed to your said highness, whereof for so much as we be not ascertained whether our said intent be by his fatherhood showed unto your said good grace or not, we send thereof unto this closed [*under this enclosed*] a copy of our said letters of our disposition towards your said high excellence, and the honour and weal of the land, wherein we will persevere with the grace of our lord.

Most probably written between 1452 and 1454. 30 and 33 H. VI.

LETTER LVII.—(XLIII. vol. iii. p. 183.)

This letter may be called a modern obituary, as it informs us of the death, and likewise of the manner of the death, of two gentlemen of consequence in the county of Norfolk.

To my well-beloved son, John Paston.

SON I greet you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, and let you weet that Robert Hill came homeward by Orwellbury, and Gurney telled him he had been at London for money and could not speeden, and behested [*promised*] Robert that he should send me money by you; I pray forget it not as ye come homeward, and speak sadly (*seriously*) for another farmer.

And as for tydings, Philip Berney[2] is passed to God on Monday last past with the greatest pain that ever I saw man; and on Tuesday Sir John Heveningham[3] yede (*went*) to his church and heard three masses, and

[1] [Fenn translates *which*; this is more grammatical, but is not the word intended.]

[2] Philip Berney, of Caston, Esq. was third son of John Berney, Esq. of Reedham, by Isabel, daughter of Sir John *Heveningham*, knight.

[3] Sir John Heveningham, knight, was lineally descended from Walter Heveningham, who resided at Heveningham in Suffolk so early as in the time of King Canute, 1017—1036. Thomas, the grandson of Sir John settled at Ketteringham in Norfolk, whose descendant, William Heveningham of the same place, was one of the judges of the High Court of Justice who tried their sovereign King Charles I. This branch of this ancient family ended in his son.

came home again never merrier, and said to his wife that he would go say a little devotion in his garden, and then he would dine;[1] and forthwith he felt a fainting in his leg, and syyd (*sit*[2]) down; this was at nine of the clock, and he was dead ere noon.

My cousin Clere prays you that ye let no man see her letter, which is ensealed under my seal. I pray you that you will pay your brother William for four ounces and an half of silk as he paid, which he sent me by William Taverner, and bring with you a quarter of an ounce even like of the same that I send you closed in this letter; and say (*tell*) your brother William that his horse hath one farcy and great running sores in his legs. God have you in keeping. Written at Norwich, on Saint Thomas's even, in great haste.

By your mother,

AGNES PASTON.

Norwich, Friday, 6th of July,
1453. 31 H. VI.

LETTER LVIII.—(XLIV. vol. iii. p. 187.)

Though this letter, like many others in this collection, contains no matter of consequence, yet as it furnishes us with an instance of careful attention in the wife to her husband's affairs, and shows her anxious desire to have everything in readiness against his expected return, I think it will be agreeable to many of my readers.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, praying you to weet that I have spoke with Newman for his place,[3] and I am thorough with him therefor, but he would not let it in no wise less than five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*). I told him that sekerly (*certainly*) ye should not know but that I hired it of him for three pounds. I said as for the noble (6*s.* 8*d.*) I should pay it of mine own purse that ye should no knowledge have thereof; and this day I have had in two cartful of hay, and your stable shall be made I hope this next week. I could not get no grant of him to have the warehouse; he saith if he may in any wise forbear it hereafter, ye shall have it, but he will not grant it in no covenant. He hath granted me the house betwixt the vowte (*vault*) and the warehouse, and that he said he granted not you.

And as for the chamber that ye assigned to mine uncle,[4] God hath purveyed (*provided*) for him as his will is; he passed to God on Monday last past, at eleven of the clock before noon, and Sir John Heveningham passed to God on Tuesday last past, whose souls both God assoil! his sickness took him on Tuesday at nine of the clock before noon, and by two afternoon he was dead.

I have begun your inventory, that should have been made ere this time if I had been well at ease; I hope to make an end thereof and of other things by this next week, and be in that other place if God send me health. I must do purvey for much stuff[5] ere I come there, for there is neither boards nor other stuff that must needs be had ere we come there; and Richard hath gathered but little money since he came from you. I have sent John Norwood this day to Gresham, Besingham, and Matlaske, to get as much money as he may. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, on the Utas[6] day of Peter and Paul.

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Friday, 6th of July,
1453. 31 H. VI.

[1] By this account it appears that the hour of dinner was between nine and ten o'clock in the forenoon.

[2] [More probably *slid*, for fell.]

[3] Newman's Place must have been a house of some consequence in the city of Norwich at this time, as the rent then set upon it was equivalent to a modern one of between sixty and eighty pounds a-year; and there being when she hired it no stable ready fitted up, shows how few horses were then kept in cities, &c.

[4] Philip Berney, whose death was mentioned in the preceding letter, was brother to Margaret Maultby, the mother of Margaret Paston.

[5] This must here mean household stuff, and I should suppose that the boards required were those used for long tables, forms, &c.

[6] The octave, or eighth day following the festival.

LETTER LIX.—(XLV. vol. iii. p. 189.)

The exact date of this letter cannot be ascertained, it was, however, most probably previously to 1454, as Elizabeth Paston's brother, in his letter to Lord Grey, tells him, "there is, and hath been divers times, late communications of marriages with divers gentlemen not determined as yet, &c." Sir William Oldhall was a gentleman of large property in the county of Norfolk, and had been already married to, or afterwards did marry, Mary, daughter of William Lord Willoughby of Eresby, by whom he left an only daughter and heir, Mary. The marriage here proposed never took effect. I have dated this letter in 1453, though doubtfully. [This letter also displays a curious picture of the diplomatic manner in which marriages, even among persons of only moderate rank were conducted. The brother labours that Sir W. Oldhall shall have his sister: the sister prayeth him to bring it to a good conclusion, so "that it xall be bothe for hyr worchup and prfyt," and the mother is content "if ye can thynke that hys lond standyt cler."]

This letter be delivered to John Paston dwelling in the Inner Inn of the Temple at London, in haste.

I GREET you well, and let you weet that this day I was with my daughter your wife, and she was in good heel (*health*) at the making of this letter, thanked be God! and she let your sister and me weet of a letter which ye sent her, that ye have been laboured to for Sir William Oldhall to have your sister, and desiring in the said letter to have an answer in short time how she will be demeaned in this matter.

Your sister recommendeth her to you, and thanketh you heartily that ye will remember her, and let her have knowledge thereof, and prayeth you that ye will do your endeavour to bring it to a good conclusion, for she saith to me that she trusteth that ye will do so that it shall be both for her worship and profit; and, as for me, if ye can think that his land standeth clear, inasmuch as I feel your sister well-willed thereto, I hold me well content.

And as for the obligation of the parson of Marlingford, which I sent you by John Newman, I pray you let it be sued; and as for the parson and Lyndesey they be accorded; and God have you in keeping, and send you his blessing and mine. Written at Norwich on Pulver Wednesday.

By your mother,

AGNES PASTON.

Norwich,
Ash Wednesday, 6 March,
1453-4. 32 H. VI.

LETTER LX.—(XLVI. vol. iii. p. 193.)

This letter, from a lover to the brother of his mistress, seems dictated by good sense, and a proper regard for the lady; it shows his anxious wish that all preliminaries should be settled to the satisfaction of the lady's friends, and hints at his own impatience for a speedy conclusion in the following expressive words, "as to my conceythe ye dayys be waxyn wonderly longe in a schorte tyme." On the back of the letter is written, in an ancient hand, "A l're somewhat touchyng a mariage yt should have been between the wth in named John Clopton and Elizabeth Paston sole daughter to Willm Paston, justice. Sed non cept effe'm." John Clopton, Esq., was one of those convicted on suspicion of receiving letters from Queen Margaret, with Sir Thomas Todenham, &c., before the Earl of Worcester, in Feb. 1461, when all of them, except Clopton, were beheaded. He married Alice, sister to Sir Robert Darcy, of Malden in Essex, and was alive in 1488. His father, Sir William Clopton, had estates at Long Melford, &c. in Suffolk. [But this projected marriage, though evincing more warmth of affection than was usually displayed, did not take place, and was probably broken off on pecuniary matters.]

Unto (my) *right reverend Sir, and my good master, John Paston.*

RIGHT worthy and worshipful sir, and my right good master, I recommend me unto you, thanking you evermore of your great gentleness and good masterhood showed unto me at all times, and specially now to my heart's ease, which on my part cannot be rewarded, but my simple service is ever ready at your commandment; furthermore, as for the matter that ye weet of, I have laboured so to my father that your intent as for the jointure shall be fulfilled; and, Sir, I beseech you since I do my part to fulfil your will, that

ye will show me your good masterhood in her chamber [1] as my full trust is, insomuch that it shall nought hurt you nor none of yours, and the profit thereof shall be unto the avail of my mistress your sister, and to me, and to none other creature.

And also my mistress your mother shall not be charged with her board after the day of the marriage, but I to discharge her of her person; and to ease me that hath her chamber may be none contradiction.

And, Sir, I am ready, and always will to perform that I have said unto you, &c.

Furthermore liketh you to weet, I was on Thursday last past at Cavendish, to deliver an estate to Wentworth in the land that was my brother Cavendish's,[2] as I told you when I was last with you, and there I spake with Crane, and he besought me that I would send over to my mistress your mother for his excuse, for he might not be with her at this time; but on the Saturday in Easter week he will not fail to be with her, so he counselled me that I and my brother Denston[3] should meet with him there, and so without your better advice I and my brother purpose us to be with you there at that time, for the sooner the lever (*better for*) me, for, as to my conceit the days be waxen wonderly (*wonderfully*) long in a short time, wherefore I beseech you send me your advice how ye will have me ruled, &c.

No more I write to you at this present time, but beseeching you to recommend (*me*) in the lowliest wise, and the Trinity preserve you body and soul.

Written with my chancery hand in right great haste on the Friday before Palm Sunday.

Your
JOHN CLOPTON.

Friday, 12 April, 1454.
32 H. VI.

NUMBER LXI.—(XLVII. vol. iii. p. 197.)

On the back of the above indenture, in a more modern hand, is written, "The marriage wthyn mentioned never toke effect, for the same Elizabeth was after first maryed to Robt Ponyngs, arm., and then to Sr George Browne, knyght." I thought this draught of a marriage settlement too curious to be omitted.

Marriage Articles betwixt Agnes Paston, &c. on the one part and William Clopton, Esq. on the other part.

THIS indenture, made betwixt Agnes that was the wife of William Paston, John Paston her son, and John Damme,[4] on the one part, and William Clopton,[5] esquire, on the other part, witnesseth that accord is taken atwyn (*between*) the said parties, that John Clopton, son and heir of the said William Clopton, by the grace of God shall wed Elizabeth, the daughter of the said Agnes, for which marriage the said Agnes, &c. shall pay to the said John Clopton four hundred marks (266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) in hand of lawful money of England, and over that (*besides*), if the said marriage be holden with the said Agnes, the said Agnes shall bear the costages thereof the day of the wedding, with such chambering [6] as shall be to the pleasure of the said Agnes: and the said William Clopton shall do [*cause*[7]] his feoffees make a lawful estate to the said William of lands, tenements, rents, and services to the yearly value of 40*l.* over all charges borne,

[1] Perhaps it means some expenses for the accommodation of the bride. [We rather think he asks for Paston's intervention in his favour in her privacy.]

[2] The Cavendishes and Cranes were respectable families in the county of Suffolk.

[3] John Denston, Esq., of Denston in Suffolk, married Catherine, daughter of Sir William Clopton, and sister to John Clopton.

[4] John Damme was a burgess in parliament for the city of Norwich, and likewise recorder.

[5] The Cloptons were a family of consequence.

[6] This word is here used in a good sense, and probably means joyous entertainment and feasting—but it may mean certain expenses to be borne, or goods, &c., to be bought on this occasion. [The original is not *chambering* but "chaumb'yr" only, and there is little doubt, means furniture or decorations for the bride's chamber.]

[7] [Fenn translates—*take care that.*]

to have and to hold to him (*for the*) term of his life, without impeachment of waste, the remainder thereof to the said John and Elizabeth and to his heirs male of her body lawfully begotten, without impeachment of waste, within twelve days after the said wedding.

And over that, within the said twelve days the said John shall do (*cause*) lawful estate to be made to the said William of lands, tenements, rents, and services to the yearly value of forty marks (26*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) over all charges borne, to have and hold to the said William (*for*) term of his life, without impeachment of waste, the remainder thereof to the said Elizabeth, to have and hold to her (*for*) term of her life, without impeachment of waste.

Also it is accorded that the said William shall make estate of all the residue of his lands which he is seized of, or any other man to his use, to such persons as the said John shall name, to the use of the said John.

Also the said John Clopton shall do (*cause*) lawful estate to be made to the said Elizabeth of lands, tenements, rents, and services to the yearly value of 30*l.* over all charges borne, to have and hold to her during the life of the said William.

And moreover the said John promytteth (*promiseth*) and ensureth by the faith of his body that he shall leave, over the 40*l.* worth (*of*) land abovesaid, to his heirs and issue male of the body of the said Elizabeth begotten, lands in fee simple or in tail to the yearly value of forty marks (26*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) in case the same male issue be governed to the said John as the son oweth [*ought*] to be to the father.[1] And, &c.

About 1454. 32 H. VI.

LETTER LXII.—(XLVIII. vol. iii. p. 201.)

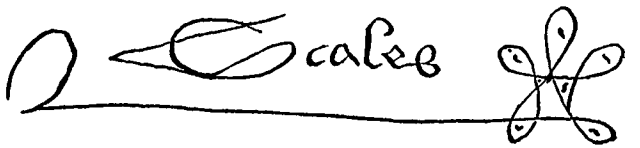
The contents of this letter show my Lord Scales to be a gentleman and a man of honour, it betrays nothing of the tyranny of an ancient baron, but breathes the sentiments of a friend. At the bottom, in a hand of the time, is written,—"Li't. āē mich. xxxiij°." So that it fixes it to the 33rd of Henry VI.

To my right well-beloved friend John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved friend, I greet you well; and forasmuch as I have understood that ye have do take (*caused to be taken*) a distress of certain beasts upon certain land, which I stand infeoffed in, in the town [*township*] of Palgrave,[2] for what cause I know not; wherefore I pray you that ye will make deliverance again of the said beasts, and if anything ye can ask be duty of right, set a day, and let your evidences and right be showed, and I shall assign counsel of mine to be there to see it; and all that reason or law will I will be right glad ye have; and otherwise, I trow, ye would not desire: and if ye will do this, I will be well paid (*satisfied*); and else ye will constrain me to purvey otherwise, as law may guide me. Our Lord have you in governance. Written at Walsingham, the 17th day of May.

Your Friend, The LORD SCALES.[3]

Walsingham, Friday, 17 May, 1454. 32 H. IV.



[1] The concluding part of the settlement ought not to escape our observation, where the forty marks per annum settled on the issue male is to depend upon the good behaviour of such issue to the father.

[2] Palgrave by Swaffham, where J. Paston had a manor.

[3] Thomas Lord Scales, whose daughter and heir afterwards married Sir Anthony Widville.—The letter is written by his secretary.

LETTER LXIII.—(XVII. vol. i. p. 77.)

[This letter is from William Botener, or Worcester [see Letter lxxxii.], a retainer of Sir John Fastolf's, to John Paston, and contains merely the news of the day, political and private occurrences of no general interest at the present time.]

LETTER LXIV.—(XLIX. vol. iii. p. 203.)

We find about this time several alliances proposed to the family for their daughter Elizabeth, none of which as yet took place. This of Scroope seems to have been approved, not only by the young lady herself, but likewise by her mother and friends, though conditionally that a better could not be obtained. She afterwards married Robert Poynings, &c. ["So yt his londe stande cleer"—this seems to have been the one thing needful in all the negotiations for marriage.]

To John Paston be this letter delivered.

SON, I greet you well, with God's blessing and mine, and I let you weet that my cousin Clere writted (*wrote*) to me that she spake with Scroope after that he had been with me at Norwich, and told her what cheer that I had made him; and he said to her he liked well by the cheer that I made him.

He had such words to my cousin Clere, that, less than (*unless*) ye made him good cheer and gave him words of comfort at London, he would no more speak of the matter.

My cousin Clere thinketh that it were a folly to forsake him less than ye know of one other as good or better; and I have assayed your sister, and I found her never so willing to none as she is to him; if it be so that his land stand clear.

I sent you a letter by Brawnton for silk, and for this matter before my cousin Clere wrote to me, the which was written on the Wednesday next after Midsummer Day.

Sir Harry Inglose is right busy about Scroope for one of his daughters.

I pray you forget not to bring me my money from Orwellberry, as ye come from London, either all or a great part; the due debt was at Christmas last past, nothing allowed, 7*l.* 14*s.* 8*d.* and at this Midsummer it is 5*l.* more; and though I allow him all his asking, it is but 1*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* less, but I am not so advised yet. As for the friar, he hath been at Saint Benet's, and at Norwich, and made great boast of the suit that he hath against me, and bought many boxes, to what intent I weet never; it is well done to beware at London, in dread if he bring any syse (*writ of assize*) at St. Margaret's (*20th July*) time.

I can no more, but Almighty God be our good Lord, who have you ever in keeping. Written at Oxnead in great haste, on the Saturday next after Midsummer.

By your mother,

AGNES PASTON.

Oxnead, Saturday, 29th of June,
1454. 32 H. VI.

LETTER LXV.—(L. vol. iii. p. 205.)

In several letters we have seen Agnes Paston in the character of an active woman, attentive to her children, and her own private affairs, but in this she appears to no great advantage as a mother, her treatment of a daughter, now a woman, seems harsh and unseemly, even for the age in which it happened, though then the parental authority was carried to very different lengths to what it is in these days. We have before seen in the articles under which the Earl of Warwick took charge of the king's person, that he required, and had granted, a power to chastise his royal pupil. This same lady, in her directions to Master Greenfield (in letter cvii.), prays him to belash her son Clement well, "if he hath not done well, nor will not mend." These manners of the age therefore being considered, we shall be the less surprised at this now seemingly severe behaviour towards her daughter. Elizabeth Clere's reflections upon it do her credit, and assure us

that she thought the young lady's treatment from her mother very improper, as tending to force her into measures which might occasion much uneasiness to her family and friends.

To my cousin, John Paston, be this letter delivered.

TRUSTY and well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you, desiring to hear of your welfare and good speed in your matters, the which I pray God send you to his plesaunce (*pleasure*) and to your heart's ease.

Cousin, I let you weet that Scroope[1] hath been in this country to see my cousin your sister, and he hath spoken with my cousin your mother, and she desireth of him that he should show you the indentures made between the knight that hath his daughter and him, whether that Scroope, if he were married and fortuned to have children, if those children should inherit his land, or his daughter, the which is married.

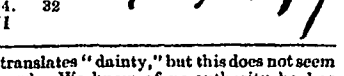
Cousin, for this cause take good heed to his indentures, for he is glad to show you them, or whom ye will assign with you; and he saith to me he is the last in the tayle (*entail*) of his livelihood the which is three hundred and fifty marks (233*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and better, as Watkin Shipdam saith, for he hath taken a compt (*an account*) of his livelihood divers times; and Scroope saith to me if he be married and have a son and heir, his daughter that is married shall have of his livelihood fifty marks (33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and no more; and therefore, cousin, meseemeth he were good for my cousin your sister with that (*without that*) ye might get her a better; and if ye can get a better I would advise you to labour it in as short time as ye may goodly, for she was never in so great sorrow as she is now-a-days, for she may not speak with no man, whosoever come, ne not (*neither*) may see nor speak with my man, nor with servants of her mother's, but that she beareth her an hand otherwise than she meaneth; and she hath since Easter the most part been beaten once in the week or twice, and sometimes twice on a day, and her head broken in two or three places. Wherefore, cousin, she hath sent to me by Fryar Newton in great counsel, and prayeth me that I would send to you a letter of her heaviness, and pray you to be her good brother, as her trust is in you; and she saith if ye may see by his evidences that his children and hers may inherit, and she to have reasonable jointure, she hath heard so much of his birth and his conditions, that and (*if*) ye will she will have him, whether that her mother will or will not, notwithstanding it is told her his person is simple (*plain*), for she saith men shall have the more dainty [*deyute*][2] of her, if she rule her to him as she ought to do.

Cousin, it is told me there is a goodly man in your inn, of the which the father died lately, and if ye think that he were better for her than Scroope, it would be laboured, and give Scroope a goodly answer, that he be not put off till ye be sure of a better; for he said when he was with me but if (*unless*) he have some comfortable answer of you he will no more labour in this matter, because he might not see my cousin your sister, and he saith he might have seen her and she had been better than she is; and that causeth him to deem that her mother was not well willing; and so have I sent my cousin your mother word; wherefore, cousin, think on this matter, for sorrow oftentime causeth women to beset them otherwise than they should do, and if she were in that case, I wot well ye would be sorry: cousin, I pray you burn this letter, that your men nor none other men see it; for and (*if*) my cousin your mother knew that I had sent you this letter, she should never love me. No more I write to you at this time, but Holy Ghost have you in keeping. Written in haste, on Saint Peter's day, by candle light.

By your cousin,

ELIZABETH CLERE.[3]

St. Peter's Day, Saturday, 29th of June, 1454. 32 H. VI



[1] There was a noble family of this name at this time, but whether the gentleman here mentioned was a branch of it or not, does not appear. He was probably the son of Millicent, the wife of Sir John Fastolf.

[2] [Fenn translates "dainty," but this does not seem the right word. We know of no authority he has for such a translation. The word is more probably intended for duty, *i. e.* think her the more dutiful.]

[3] Elizabeth Clere was the daughter and heir of Thomas Uvedale, Esq. of Tacolneston, in Norfolk, and now the widow of Robert Clere, of Ormesby, Esq. She died in 1492.

LETTER LXVI.—(LI. vol. iii. p. 211.)

The ward here mentioned, I should suppose, was Thomas Fastolf of Ipswich, of whom Sir John Fastolf (in his letter to J. Paston, dated 11th of November, 1454) so much wished to have obtained the guardianship. This transaction might have happened previously to Sir John's letter in June, 1454, or in the December following in the same year, as Saint John Baptist's day is in the former, Saint John Evangelist's day in the latter month, but the exact date is immaterial. [It is, however, probably December 28, as that was the Saturday preceding Saint John the Evangelist in 1454.] The letter presents us with a curious instance of the methods used to obtain and secure the persons of minors, and shows us the warlike manner in which those travelled, who supposed they should meet with any resistance. The taking of a child like the ward with them, when most probably the real ward was conveyed another way, was an ingenious artifice to deceive those who might lay in wait to attack them, and endeavour to get possession of his person.

Unto my right worshipful master Paston be this bill delivered in haste.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved master, I recommend me unto you, desiring to hear of your good prosperity and welfare; and as touching for Sir Philip Wentford,[1] he rode unto London ward upon Saint John's day, and on the evening afore he sent to my master for to have some of his men for to ride with him to Colchester, and for because he should not have no suspicion to me, I rode myself and a fellow with me; and he rode with an hundred horse with jackets[2] and salets[3], and rusty haubergeons;[4] and there rode with him Guybon of Debenham, and Timperley, and all the fellowship that they could make; and Guybon said that he would indict as many as he could understand that were of the other party; and Long Bernard was there also, and he made Sir Philip Wentford to turn again, and made every man to bend their bows and alight down off their horse, for to weet and (*if*) any man would come against them; and he said how he should not let his way neither for Sir John Fastolf, nor for Paston, nor for none of them all.

And as for the ward he was not there, but there was had another child like him, and he rode next him, and when that he was two miles beyond Colchester, he sent him home again with a certain meny (*fellowship*); and Sir Philip Wentford, and Guybon of Debenham, and Timperley, and Bernard, they took a man of Stratford, a sowter (*a shoemaker*), and his name is Pearson, and they inquired him of every man's name of the other party; and he told them as many as he could; and they bade him inquire further for to know all; for they desired of him for to inquire as far as he could, and he should have well for his labour. No more to you at this time, but the Holy Ghost have you in his keeping. Written at Hadley, the Saturday after Saint John's day, and I beseech you heartily recommend me to my master Alblaster.

By your man,

R. DOLLAY.[5]

Hadley, in Suffolk,
Saturday, 29th of June,
or 28th of December, 1454.
32 or 33 H. VI.

[1] Though this name is here written Wentford, I rather believe it means Sir Philip Wentworth, of Nettlested, in Suffolk, who married Mary, the daughter of Lord Clifford.

[2] The jack or jacket, was a military vestment, calculated for the defence of the body, composed of linen stuffed with cotton, wool, or hair quilted, and commonly covered with leather.

[3] A salet was a light helmet of various construction.

[4] The haubergeon was a coat composed either of plate or chain-mail without sleeves. For a fuller account and view of these the reader is referred to Mr. Grose's accurate 'Treatise on Ancient Armour and Weapons.' Quarto, 1785.

[5] R. Dollay seems to have been a servant belonging to some one of the party opposed to J. Paston, in J. Paston's interest.

LETTER LXVII.—(LII. vol. iii. p. 215.)

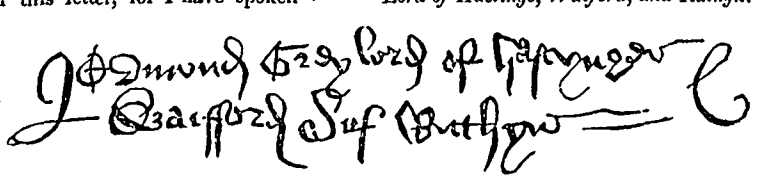
Edmund succeeded his grandfather, Reginald Lord Grey, of Ruthyn, in 1441. In 1464 he was appointed Lord Treasurer to Edward IV. and the next year created Earl of Kent. He died in 1489. The barony of Ruthyn is now in the Earl of Sussex. [It is now, 1840, vested in the Baroness Grey de Ruthyn, married to the Marquis of Hastings.] These letters discover to us the great attention paid by families to the proper disposition of the female branches in suitable and advantageous marriages. [But in this case a subsequent letter shows Lord Grey was only labouring for his own private interest; and the following letter from J. Paston seems not to place any great degree of confidence in him.]

To my trusty and well-beloved John Paston, Esquire, be this letter delivered.

TRUSTY and well-beloved friend, I commend me to you, certifying you that and (*if*) your sister be not yet married, I trust to God I know that where she may be married to a gentleman of 300 marks (200*l.*) of livelihood, the which is a great gentleman born, and of good blood, and if ye think that I shall labour any farther therein, I pray you send me word by the bringer of this letter, for I have spoken with the parties, and they have granted me that they will proceed no farther therein till I speak with them again, and therefore I pray you send me word in haste how that ye will be disposed therein, and God have you in his keeping. Written at Ampthill, the 11th day of July last past.

By EDMOND GREY,
Lord of Hastings, Waiford, and Ruthyn.

Ampthill,
Thursday, 11th
of July, 1454.
32 H. VI.



N.B. At the bottom of this letter, in the hand-writing of John Paston, is the following memorandum:—
"Lib'at. p'. Will'. Aleyn Valett'. dñi xiiij. Julij A°. xxxij°. H. VI."

LETTER LXVIII.—(LIII. vol. iii. p. 217.)

The following is transcribed from a copy of the original letter (in J. Paston's own hand) which he had sent to Lord Grey; it was preserved with the preceding one of his lordship to J. Paston. He shows himself in this letter not only a kind brother, but one who was attentive to his sister's welfare, for though this alliance came recommended by a nobleman, who assured him that the gentleman proposed was not only well born but had an handsome livelihood, yet he would give no positive answer till he knew for whom the application was made, and in what county his estate was situated. This letter, being only a copy, has no concluding subscription.

The Lord Grey.

RIGHT worshipful and my right good lord, I recommend me to your good lordship, and whereas it pleased your lordship to direct your letter to me for a marriage for my poor sister to a gentleman of your knowledge of 300 marks (200*l.*) livelihood, in case she were not married; wherefore I am greatly bound to do your lordship service; for sooth, my lord, she is not married, nor insured to no man; there is and hath been divers times and late, communication of such marriages with divers gentlemen not determined as yet, and whether the gentleman that your lordship meaneth of be one of them or nay I doubt; and whereas your said letter specifieth that I should send you word whether I thought you should labour farther in the matter or nay. In that my lord I dare not presume to write so to you without I knew the gentleman's name; notwithstanding, my lord, I shall take upon me, with the advice of other of her friends, that she shall neither be married nor insured to no creature, nor farther proceed in no such matter, before the feast of the Assumption of our Lady (15*th of August,*) next coming, during which time your lord-

ship may send me, if it please you, certain information of the said gentleman's name, and of the place and country where his livelihood lieth, and whether he hath any children; and after I shall demean me in the matter as your lordship shall be pleased; for in good faith, my lord, it were to me great joy that my said poor sister were, according to her poor degree, married by your advice, trusting then that ye would be her good lord.

Right worshipful and my right good lord, I beseech Almighty God to have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, the 15th day of July.

Norwich, Monday, 15th of July, 1454. 32 H. VI.

LETTER LXIX.—(LIV. vol. iii. p. 221.)

By the conversation that had passed between my Lord Grey and Billing, we find that his lordship had his own interest in view in the match he had proposed to John Paston for his sister, but on finding that his ward was not willing to give up to him the lady's fortune, he would proceed no farther in the proposal. Some part of this account, however, appears obscure.

To my right worshipful brother, John Paston, be this delivered.

Right worshipful brother, I recommend me to you, desiring to hear of your welfare. Billing[1] the serjeant hath been in his country, and he came to London this week; he sent for me and asked me how I fared; I told him here is pestilence; and said I fared the better (*that*) he was in good hele (*health*) for it was noised that he was dead; a toke (*he took*) me to him, and asked how my sister did, and I answered well, never better; he said he was with the Lord Grey, and they talked of a gentleman which is ward to my lord: I remember he said it was Harry Grey that they talked of; and my lord said, "I was busy within this few days to a maryd (*have married*) him to a gentlewoman in Norfolk, that shall have 400 marks (266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) to her marriage, and now he will not be (*q? buy*[2]) me, for 400 marks would do me ease, and now he would have his marriage money himself, and therefore, quoth he, he shall marry himself for me."

These words had my lord to Billing, as he told me, he understood that my lord laboured for his own avail; and counselled to bid her be wise; and I thanked him for his good counsel.

I sent you an answer of your letter of Sir John Fastolf's coming home as he told me himself, nevertheless he bode (*staid*) longer than he said himself he should ado (*have done*).

He told me he should make an end betwixt Scroop[3] and my sister while he is in Norfolk; many would it should not prove, for they say it is an unlikely marriage.

In case Cressener[4] be talked of any more, he is counted a gentlemanly man and a worshipful, ye know who is most worshipful better than I; at the reverence of God draw to some conclusion, it is time.

My Lord Chancellor[5] come not here, since I came to London, neither my Lord of York.[6]

My Lord of Canterbury[7] hath received

[1] Thomas Billing was made a serjeant in 1453, and about 1469 was appointed Chief Justice of the King's Bench.

[2] [Perhaps *be me* for *be with me*—agree with me.]

[3] Scroope was a widower, and most probably much older than the lady, and therefore it is spoken of as an unlikely (*disproportioned*) marriage. He was the son-in-law of Sir John Fastolf.

[4] Who Cressener was I cannot discover.

[5] Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury, was appointed chancellor in April, 1454.

[6] This must be either Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, or William Booth, who was translated to the province of York in 1452, from Coventry and Litchfield.

[7] Thomas Bourchier was elected by the convent to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury in April, 1454, from the see of Ely. He lived fifty-one years after his first consecration, dying in 1486, after he had been archbishop thirty-two years. No Englishman ever continued so long a bishop, nor has any archbishop either before or since his time enjoyed this dignity so many years. [The present Archbishop of York already nearly equals this. He was consecrated in 1791, forty-nine years, and has been archbishop since 1807, thirty-three years.

his cross, and I was with him in the king's chamber when he made his homage; I told Harry Wilton the demeaning betwixt the king and him, it were too long to write.

As for the priest that did arrest me, I cannot understand that it is the priest that ye mean.

Here is great pestilence;[1] I purpose to flee into the country. My Lord of Oxford[2] it come again fro the sea, and he hath gotten him little thank in this country; much more thing I would write to you, but I lack leisure.

Harry Wilton saw the king. My Lord of Ely[3] hath done his few the (*faith or fealty*). God have you in his blessed keeping.

Written at London, on the Friday before our Lady's-day[4] the nativity, in great haste. I pray recommend me to my sister and to my cousin Clere.

By your brother,
WILLIAM PASTON.[5]

London, Friday, 6th of September,
1454. 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXX.—(LV. vol. iii. p. 225.)

On the back of this letter, in an ancient hand, is written as follows:—"Sr Jo. Fastolf willing to have maried T. Fastolf to one of the daughters of Jo. Paston if he had obteyned the wardshipp of hym." This Thomas Fastolf appears by the pedigrees of the family to have been the son and heir of Nicholas Fastolf of Ipswich, by Elizabeth, daughter and co-heir of Sir John Braham, Knt., and cousin to Sir John Fastolf. He was at this time about ten years old, as appears by a subsequent letter, where his mother complains of those who had obtained the wardship of him, endeavouring to make him younger than he was, that they might keep longer possession of his livelihood. In 1465 she says he was above twenty-one years old. This is a very curious letter, as it affords us a true representation of the address made use of to get possession of a minor, not only that the management of his estate might be in the hands of the guardian, but likewise the power of marrying him to whom, and on what terms, he pleased. In this case the match proposed seems to have been a proper one if the young people, whose inclinations were never consulted on these occasions, happened to approve of each other; if they did not, they were both perhaps rendered miserable during their lives. This power of marrying the ward, when under the direction of a covetous or bad guardian, was often most shamefully abused; and, tyrannical as it was, it continued in force till the reign of Charles II. I should suppose that Sir J. Fastolf did not accomplish his purpose, both from what the mother of the young man complains of in the letter above alluded to, and from no marriage taking place between him and a daughter of J. Paston.

To the worshipful and my right well-beloved cousin, John Paston.

WORSHIPFUL and right well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you; like you to weet that I have received a letter at this time from John Bocking, with a copy of the patent concerning the wardship that ye wote of, by which I understand that ye have both wrought and holpen, by your great wisdom, to bring this matter about which I desired your friendship and good advice for, the surety of the said ward; and for expedition of which I thank you right heartily, and pray you to continue forth your good labours in the same, in such wise as it may be made sure in all wise, though it cost me the more of my good.

And whereas it is remembered me by the said letters that I should labour to get the said ward into my governance, truly I cannot see how I could do it to be done, for I have none acquaintance in that country that I could trust to, without the sheriff might be my tender friend in this cause, or other such as ye think best; wherefore I pray you heartily to take this matter tenderly to heart, and that ye like (*to*) seek a mean of such friends as ye can best advise, and may verily trust upon, to guide this matter in such wise as mine intent might be sped for the possession of it; for now that I have gone so far in the matter,

[1] I do not find this year marked as a year of pestilence by our historians.

[2] John de Vere Earl of Oxford, beheaded in 1461.

[3] William Gray, a man of noble birth and great learning: he continued bishop of Ely till 1478, when he died at Downham in Norfolk, and was buried in his own cathedral.

[4] 8th of September.

[5] William Paston was the fourth *son* of Sir William Paston, the judge; and having been a steady Lancastrian, had a pardon for all treasons, &c., under the Great Seal, dated 15th of July, 1468. 8 E. IV.

I would not it failed for no good, but (*that*) it proved well and took to a good conclusion.

And whereas I have understood lately, by certain well-willers to you ward, which have moved me, that in case the said ward might be had that ye desire an alliance should take atwixt a daughter of yours and the said ward; of which motion I was right glad to hear of, and will be right well willing and helping that your blood and mine might increase in alliances; and if it please you that by your wisdom and good conduct that ye would help bear out this matter substantially against my party contrary and evil-willers that I might have mine intent, I ensure you ye and I should appoint and accord in such wise as ye should hold you right well pleased both for the increasing of your lineage and also of mine; and I pray you beware whom ye make of your counsel and mine in this matter, and that it may be well bore out ere ye come thence, and in a sure way; and if I had known rather (*earlier*) of your intent, it should have cost me more of my good before this to have come to a good conclusion, which I promise yet shall be and (*if*) the matter take, by the faith of my body.

Worshipful and right well-beloved cousin, I pray God speed you in this matter, and send you your good desires. Written at Caister, the 11th day of November, in the 33d year of King Henry VI.

Your cousin, JOHN FASTOLF.

Caister,
Monday, 11 Nov. 1454. 33 H. VI.

Item,[1] cousin I pray you when ye see time, that my Lord of Canterbury,[2] and my Lord Cromwell[3] may be spoken with for the goods of my Lord Bedford, being in divers men's hands, be compelled to be brought in, as ye shall see more along (*at large*) of this matter, with the writings that I have made mention (*of*) and left with John Bocking and William Barker.

LETTER LXXI.—(LVI. vol. iii. p. 231.)

On the back of the letter is written in an ancient hand, "The said Jo. Paston allyed to S^t^ Jo. Fastolf by his wife, vidz. M^r^garett Mauteby, p'ut patt. infra." We have in this letter an instance of the desire of acquiring the wardship of rich minors, in order to make advantageous marriages for the families of those who were so fortunate as to obtain the care of them. Who the ward was is not here mentioned, but the young lady alluded to, and whom T. Howys, in pleasantry, I suppose, used to call his wife, must have been either Anne or Margery, daughters of J. Paston, the elder of whom could not have been at this time more than ten years old. [There is little doubt but that the ward was the J. Fastolf mentioned in preceding letter. Thomas Howys was an agent for Sir J. Fastolf and the present letter is dated from Caister. See letter xxix. p. 20.]

To the worshipful Sir, and my good master, John Paston, at London, in haste.

WORSHIPFUL and reverend Sir, and my good master, I recommend me to you in as diligent wise as on my part appertaineth, and please you to weet that my master was right well pleased with your faithful labour in fulfilling the patent for the ward of A. B. C. and he will faithfully labour as ye have advised him by writing of John Bocking; and (*to*) put my master in more courage, I moved to him upon mine head, that in case be the child were wise, that then it were a good marriage between my wife your daughter and him; and, Sir, my master was glad when he heard that mean, considering that your daughter is descended of him by the mother's side; and, Sir, I have inquired after the said child, and no doubt of but he is likely and of great wit, as I hear by report of sundry persons; and it is so, as I am credibly informed, that Jeffrey Boleyn[4] maketh great labour for marriage of the said child to one of his daughters; I would well to him, but better to you; wherefore that ye diligently labour for expedition of this matter, that in case ye can

[1] This relates to the money due to Sir John Fastolf from the Duke of Bedford, as his share of the ransom paid by the Duke of Alençon, who was taken prisoner at the battle of Verneuil in 1424. See Letter xci. p. 70, and the notes thereto.

[2] Thomas Bourchier was elected from the see of Ely to the archiepiscopal dignity in April this year.

[3] Henry Lord Cromwell.

[4] Sir Jeffrey Boleyn was Lord Mayor of London in 1457, and at this time had two daughters, Isabel, afterwards married to William Cheyney, Esq. and Anne, afterwards the wife of Sir Henry Heydon, of Baconsthorpe, Knt. This Jeffrey was great grandfather to Queen Anne Boleyn, the Queen of Henry VIII.

find any mean there to have the said child, and we shall do faithfully our diligence in like wise here, as ye advise us, &c.

And, Sir, as ye think with advice of my master, Yelverton, Jenney, and others my master's counsel therein, that the sheriff may be rewarded,[1] and if my said master's counsel think it be to (*be*) done, that then ye like to take an action[2] upon an atteint, which ye must with them take upon you at this time in my master's absence, for as ye do in that matter he will hold him content, for William Barker hath an instruction of my master's intent upon the same. And I send John Barker a copy of the panel, which I showed you at Caister, &c.

Almighty Jesu have you eternally in his merciful governance. Written at Caister the Wednesday next after Saint Martin, anno 33 (H. VI.) THOMAS HOWYS.

Caister, Wednesday, 13 Nov. 1454.
33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXII.—(XVII. vol. i. p. 81.)

This short, though curious letter, conveys to us a very particular account of the king's disorder from himself; he mentions his total loss of memory, which, from the circumstances here related, appears to have commenced about October 1453, and to have continued till Christmas, 1454. From this letter, likewise, we may form a true judgment of this king's character and disposition as to charity, devotion, and meekness.

To my well-beloved cousin, John Paston, be this delivered.

RIGHT well-beloved cousin, I recommended me to you, letting you weet such tidings as we have.

Blessed be God, the king is well amended, and hath been since Christmas Day; and on Saint John's day commanded his almoner to ride to Canterbury with his offering, and commanded the secretary to offer at Saint Edward's.

And on the Monday afternoon the Queen came to him, and brought my Lord Prince[3] with her, and then he asked what the prince's name was, and the queen told him Edward; and then he held up his hands, and thanked God thereof.

And he said he never knew him till that time; nor wist not what was said to him, nor wist not where he had been, whilst he hath been sick till now; and he asked who were godfathers, and the queen told him, and he was well apaid (*content*).

And she told him that the cardinal[4] was dead; and he said, he knew never thereof till that time; and he said, one of the wisest lords in this land was dead.

And my Lord of Winchester[5] and my lord of Saint John's[6] were with him on the morrow after Twelfthday, and he spake to them as well as ever he did; and when they came out they wept for joy.

And he saith he is in charity with all the the world, and so he would all the lords were.

And now he saith matins of Our Lady, and evensong, and heareth his mass devoutly.

And Richard shall tell you more tidings by mouth.

I pray you recommend me to my Lady Morley, and to Master Prior, and to my Lady Felbrigg, and to my Lady Hevening-ham, and to my cousin your mother, and to my cousin your wife.

Written at Greenwich,[7] on Thursday after twelfthday. By your cousin,
EDMUND CLERE.

Greenwich,
Thursday, 10th of
January, 1454.
33 H. VI.

[1] [This word seems here to be used ironically. The nature of the affair does not appear, but it evidently had no reference to the wardship.]

[2] An action of attaint lies, after judgment, against a jury that hath given a false verdict in any Court of Record, if the debt or damages are above 40*s*.

[3] Prince Edward was born at Westminster, in October, 1453. 32 H. VI.

[4] John Kemp, Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal, &c. died on the 22nd of March, 1453.

[5] William de Wainflect, Lord Bishop of Winchester.

[6] Robert Botill, Lord Prior of St. John's of Jerusalem, in Middlesex.

[7] Greenwich was at this time the residence of the court, in which Edmund Clere, the writer of this letter, had an appointment. He was a younger son of John Clere, by Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Philip Branch, Knight, and, by the gift of his mother, possessed manors and estates in Norfolk and Suffolk. This ancient family was seated at Ormsby in Norfolk. The letter has the impression of a rose on the seal.

LETTER LXXIII.—(LVII. vol. iii. p. 233.)

Though Sir John Fastolf knew the meaning of these scornful words mentioned in this letter, we at this distance of time shall find a difficulty in explaining them. They seem to signify, that Sir John was a gascon, (*a boaster,*) and that it was necessary to beware of him, as those who eat at his table were often deceived by him to their cost. At the time that this spirited letter was dictated by him and written by his secretary, he was nearly eighty years of age; we see, however, the youthful ardour of the veteran soldier rekindling at the insulting language used in his absence to defame his character.

To my right trusty and well-beloved cousin, John Paston, in goodly haste.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you; and please you to weet that I am advertised that at a dinner in Norwich, where as ye and other gentlemen were present, that there were certain persons, gentlemen, which uttered scornful language of me, as in this wise with more, saying, "War the gosune, war, and go we to dinner, go we where? to Sir John Fastolf's and there we shall well pay therefore." What their meaning was I know well to no good intent to me ward; wherefore, cousin, I pray you, as my trust is in you, that ye give me knowledge by writing what gentlemen they be that had this report with more; and what more gentlemen were present, as ye would I should and (*it*) were my duty to do for you in semblable (*similar*) wise. And I shall keep your information in this matter secret; and with God's grace so purvey for them as they shall not all be well pleased. At such a time a man may know his friends and his foes asunder, &c.

Jesu preserve and keep you, written at Caister, the 7th day of February, in the 33rd year of King Henry VI.

JOHN FASTOLF, *Knight.*

Caister,
Thursday, 7 Feb. 1454. 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXIV.—(LVIII. Vol. iii. p. 237.)

[This letter is from John Martin, abbot of St. Benedict's, in the parish of Ludham, Norfolk, dated March 17, 1454-55, containing an invitation to J. Paston to dinner, written, not in the style of a scholar or an ecclesiastic, but in the polite manner of a man of the world and gentleman.]

LETTER LXXV.—(LIX. vol. iii. p. 239.)

We have often seen Margaret Paston in the character of the attentive, careful, and obedient wife; we here view her as the tender and disconsolate one. Her sorrow for her husband's displeasure at her "simpleness" is expressed in the most artless and affectionate manner; could he "bere hevynesse in his hert ayens her" after this letter?

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, beseeching you that ye be not displeased with me, though my simpleness caused you for to be displeased with me; by my truth it is not my will neither to do nor say that should cause you for to be displeased, and if I have done (*it*), I am sorry thereof, and will amend it; wherefore I beseech you to forgive me, and that ye bear none heaviness in your heart against me, for your displeasure should be too heavy to me to endure with.

I send you the roll that ye sent for, ensealed, by the bringer hereof; it was found in your trussing coffer.[1] As for herring,[2] I have bought an horse-load for 4*s.* 6*d.* I can get none eels yet; as for bever[3] there is promised me some, but I might not get it yet.

[1] [Clothes chest.]

[2] These herrings and eels were for their Lent provision, and this letter was probably written in 1454, when the first Sunday in Lent was March 10.

[3] [*Bever* is generally explained as a meat between dinner and supper; the term is still used among farming labourers in Essex for the luncheon between breakfast and dinner; but it cannot be used in any such sense here, nor can it be used for *beverage*—drink.]

I sent to Joan Petche to have an answer for the windows, for she might not come to me; and she sent me word that she had spoken thereof to Thomas Ingham, and he said that he should speak with you himself, and he should accord with you well enough, and said to her it was not her part to desire of him to stop the lights; and also he said it was not his part to do it, because the place is his but for years.

And as for all other errands that ye have commanded for to be done, they shall be done as soon as they may be done. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written at Norwich, on the Monday next after Saint Edward.

Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Monday,
March, 1454. 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXVI.—(XIX. Vol. i. p. 85.)

This letter appears to have been written by the earl's secretary, and signed in the same hand, "Ric Erle Warwyke;" it has no date, but was most probably written before the civil wars openly broke out between the houses of York and Lancaster. It is in the plural style, as we and our, &c.

To our right trusty and well-beloved friend, Sir Thomas Todenham.[1]

RIGHT trusty, and well-beloved friend, we greet you well, heartily desiring to hear of your welfare, which we pray God preserve to your heart's desire; and if it please you to hear of our welfare, we were in good health at the making of this letter, praying you heartily that ye will consider our message, which our chaplain, Master Robert Hopton, shall inform you of; for, as God knoweth, we have great business daily, and have had here before this time, wherefore we pray you to consider the purchase that we have made with one John Swyffhcote (*Southcote*), Esquire, of Lincolnshire of [2] 88*l.* by the year, whereupon we must pay the last payment the Monday next after St. Martin's Day (*11th of November*), which sum is 458*l.* wherefore we pray you with all our heart, that ye will lend us ten or twenty pounds, or what the said Master Robert wants of his payment, as we may do for you in time for to come, and we shall send it you again afore New Year's Day with the grace of God, as we are a true knight.[3]

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[1] Sir Thomas Todenham, born in 1399, was the second son of Sir Robert Todenham, but, by the death of his elder brother, became his heir, and resided at Oxburgh in Norfolk. Whilst under age, in 1417, he married Agnes, daughter of John Wodehouse, Esq., and in 1436, after a full hearing of the cause at Lynn, before the Chancellor of Norwich, the Prior of Lynn, &c., he was divorced from her, on proof, and on her own confession, of adultery; and had power to marry again. She had before this left him, and was at the time of her conviction a nun professed, at Crabhouse, in Wiggenhall, in Norfolk. The close of his life was still more unfortunate, for in February, 1461, 1 E. IV. John, Earl of Oxford, Aubrey, his son and heir, this Sir Thomas Todenham, John Clopton, John Montgomery, and William Tyrrel, Esqrs., were arrested by John Earl of Worcester, Constable of England, on suspicion of having received letters from Margaret, queen of Henry VI.; and being convicted in court before the said Earl of Worcester, were all beheaded (except Clopton) on Tower Hill, on the 22d of February, 1461.

[2] It is to be wished that this letter had mentioned the sum already paid, as we could then have exactly determined the purchase money for an estate of 88*l.* a-year in those days.

[3] His promise for the repayment of the money at the time fixed is *by his knighthood*, a sacred promise in that age of chivalry. Sir Thomas was a man of large property, and rich in money likewise. [Mr. Hallam, in his 'View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages,' iii. 452, is inclined to think this application was one of many addressed by the Earl of Warwick to his adherents for the purpose of raising a considerable sum, and thus ensuring their adhesion. But we think the particularity of the detail as to the purpose for which he required it, and the promise of so speedy a repayment, is against the supposition. The scarcity of coin, upon which we have before remarked, seems to us a sufficient cause, without searching deeper.]

For there is none in your country that we might write to for trust so well as unto you, for, as we be informed, ye be our well willer, and so we pray you of good continuance.

Wherefore we pray you that ye consider our intent of this money, as ye will that we do for you in time to come, as God knoweth, who have you in his keeping.

Written at London, on All Soul's day, within our lodging in the Grey Friars,[1] within Newgate.

RICHARD EARL OF WARWICK.

London,
2nd of November, before
1455. 34 H. VI.

The seal of this letter is of red wax, on which is the bear and ragged staff, the badge of this nobleman, with his motto, the whole very fair and curious, and around it is a braid of twine.

LETTER; LXXVII.—(XX. vol. i. p. 89.)

This letter is written by the secretary, and signed by the Earl himself; it has no date of the year, but was certainly written before 1460, for in that year the Earl presented Richard Cheyne to the rectory of Little Snoring, which was an appurtenant to the manors, and which, when this letter was written, had been lately purchased. This and the preceding letter, though they contain nothing curious in themselves, yet deserve a place in this collection, as being perhaps the only private letters extant of this nobleman, who, from his great power and authority, was called the King Maker; and from his large possessions and magnificent style of living, the great Earl of Warwick. He was the son and heir of Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury, and married Anne, daughter of Richard de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who on the death of Anne Countess of Warwick (the only child of her brother Henry Duke of Warwick) in her infancy, became heir to the honours and inheritance of her family. Richard, in right of his lady, assumed the title of Earl of Warwick, and in 1449 obtained a confirmation of it from Henry VI. In 1460 he succeeded his father as Earl of Salisbury, and was killed in the battle of Barnet, on Easter-day 1471. [They also incidentally show, what we have previously remarked on, the great scarcity of money; and also the desire, not yet extinct, of the aristocracy to add to their landed property, doubtless as a means of extending their influence.]

To the worshipful and my right trusty friend, John Paston, Esquire.

WORSHIPFUL and my right trusty and well-beloved friend, I greet you well, and forasmuch as I have purchased of the worshipful and my well-beloved friend, Prior of Walsingham,[2] two manors in Little Snoring with the appurtenances in the county of Norfolk, which manors be cleped *(called)* Bowle's and Walcote's.

I desire and heartily pray you that ye will show to me, and my feoffees in my name, your good will and favour; so that I may by your friendship the more peaceably enjoy my aforesaid purchase.

And moreover I pray you to give credence in this matter to my well-beloved chaplain Sir John Southwell, bearer of this my letter.

And in the same matter to be my faithful friend, as my great trust is in you; wherein ye shall do to me a singular pleasure, and cause me to be to you right good lord, which some time shall be to you available by the grace of God, who preserve you and send you welfare.

Given under my signet at Middleham,[3] the 23d day of August.

Richard Earl of Warwick, } R. WARWICK.

Middleham,
23d of August, before 1460. 38 H. VI.

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[1] The Earl of Warwick lodged at his house in the Grey Fryers when he came to London, by the king's desire, in February, 1458, to meet the lords of the opposite party on amicable terms.

[2] Thomas Hunt was prior from 1437 to 1474.

[3] The lordship of Middleham in Yorkshire came to the family of Nevile by the marriage of Robert de Nevile with Mary, the daughter and co-heir of Ralph Fitz-Randulph.

LETTER LXXVIII.—(XXI. vol. i. p. 93.)

hi sletter of the Duke of York, written by his secretary, with his title at the top, and in the regal style, was most probably sent when he was Protector of the Kingdom in 1454, or 1455. It is sealed on red wax, with his own signet, having the arms of France and England quarterly, and a label of three points argent, charged with nine torteauxes. The purport of the first part of it is to thank J. Paston for some services done by him, in regard to some disputes which the prior and convent of Walsingham had had relative to some estates. Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, &c., father of Edward IV. Protector of the Kingdom under Henry VI. was slain, when very near the summit of his wishes, the throne, in the battle of Wakefield, in December 1460, having been imprudently tempted out of his castle of Sandal, by the menaces and defiances of Queen Margaret. He married Cecily, daughter of Ralph Nevile, Earl of Westmoreland, and sister to Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury, father of the Earl of Warwick.

To our right trusty and well-beloved John Paston, Esquire.

THE DUKE OF YORK.

RIGHT trusty and well beloved, we greet you heartily well. And of your benevolence, aid, and tender love by you, at the instance and at the reverence of us, to our right trusty and well-beloved in God, the prior and convent of the house of our Lady of Walsingham, of our patronage, in such matters as they had ado[1] *(business)* for certain livelihood by them claimed to belong unto the said house, favourably and tenderly showed, as heartily as we can we thank you. And desire and pray you of your good continuance.

And as far as right, law, and good conscience will, to have in favourable recommendation such persons as (*have*) been, or shall be, committed to take possession and seisin, in the name and to the use of our full worshipful nephew, the Earl of Warwick, in and of the manors and lordships of Bowle's and Walcote's, with the appurtenances, in Little Snoring, in the county of Norfolk, as our great trust is unto you. And God have you in his keeping.

Given under our signet, at our castle of Sandal, the 19th day of August.

Sandal Castle,
19th of August,
1454, or 1455,
32 or 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXIX.—(XXII. vol. i. p. 97.)

I have placed this and the following letter together, as they both contain instructions from the nobility for returning persons of their nomination as knights of the shire. We have here a true picture of the dependency of the House of Commons on that of the Lords. Neither of the letters have any date of the year. [But, from the names, it clearly refers to the election afterwards noticed by John Jenny (Letter lxxxiii.). The dependence, however, was not so complete as Sir John Fenn asserts, at least in this county, for it seems that John Howard was strongly objected to, and we know that even in these disturbed times the House of Commons occasionally showed great independence, and proved that they were not of the king's "menyall s'vaunts." In Nov., 1455, the same House of Commons insisted on its right of taking part in the nomination of a protector, in opposition to the claims of the clergy and nobility, and after refusing to proceed to any other business till this demand was settled, had the right allowed. (See 'Pictorial History of England,' vol. ii. p. 23.)]

To our right trusty and well-beloved John Paston, Esq.

THE DUCHESS OF NORFOLK.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved, we greet you heartily well; and forasmuch as it is thought right necessary for diverse causes that my lord have at this time in the parliament such persons as belong unto him, and be of his menial servants; wherein we conceive your goodwill and diligence shall be right expedient; we heartily desire and pray you that, at the contemplation of these our letters, as our special trust is in you, ye will give and apply your voice unto our right well-beloved cousin and servants, John Howard, and Sir Roger Chamberlayn, to be knights of the

[1] [Ado is *to do*.]

shire; exhorting all such others as by your wisdom shall now be behoveful, to the good exploit and conclusion of the same.

And in your faithful attendance and true devoir in this part ye shall do unto my lord and us a singular pleasure, and cause us hereafter to thank you therefore, as ye shall hold you right well content and agreed with the grace of God, who have you ever in his keeping.

Written at Framlingham Castle, the 8th day of June.

Framlingham Castle,
8th of June.

LETTER LXXX.—(XXIII. vol. i. p. 99.)

The contents of this letter plainly point out to us that the election of the members of the House of Commons, even for counties, was in this distant age influenced by the great and leading men of the time. We have here the clearest evidence that Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, at their meeting at Bury St. Edmund's in Suffolk, determined who should be returned knights of the shire for the county of Norfolk, and sent their instructions accordingly. John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, at this time, seems to have been a friend to the Duke of York: this letter therefore, must have been written previous to the Duke's professed design upon the throne; for in that contest the Earl sided with the house of Lancaster, and being taken, was beheaded in 1461, the first year of Edward IV., when he was about 55 years old. He married Elizabeth, the daughter and heir of Sir John Howard, knight, who had possessions at Winch, in Norfolk. The names of the two candidates to be elected are written on a schedule, or strip of paper, which is fastened to the original letter by a piece of wax. [No doubt the influence of great and leading men must have had much weight, but this letter goes far to prove that it was effected by agreement and compromise among the leading men, and does not greatly militate against the independence of the house. Oxford and Norfolk appear here to have each nominated one, but after the battle of St. Alban's, Norfolk's party being predominant, he names both, for we believe this letter should precede that of the Duchess of Norfolk just given.]

To our well-beloved John Paston.

Right well beloved, I greet you well; and as touching for tidings I can none, saving that my Lord of Norfolk met with my Lord of York at Bury on Thursday, and there were together till Friday nine of the clock, and then they departed; and there a gentleman of my Lord of York took, unto a yeoman of mine, John Deye, a token and a sedell (*schedule*) of my lord's intent whom he would have knights of the shire, and I send you a sedell closed (*schedule enclosed*) of their names in this same letter, wherefore me thinketh (*it*) well done to perform my lord's intent, &c.

Written the 18th day of October at Winch.

Oxenford.

County of Norfolk, { Sir William Chamberlayn. Henry Grey.

Winch, in Norfolk,
18th of October, before 1455.

LETTER LXXXI.—(XXIV. vol. i. p. 101.)

The account in this letter refers to the first battle of St. Alban's, which Rapin says was fought on the 31st of May, 1455, 33 H. VI., but which all our other historians place on the 23rd of May. This letter certainly fixes it before the 25th (Whitsunday); therefore it was most probably fought on Friday the 23rd. History informs us that Humphrey Stafford, Earl of Stafford, and eldest son and heir of the Duke of Buckingham, died of the wounds he received in this battle: when this letter therefore was written he was not dead. And we are told by our historians that the king lost 5000 or 8000 men, though Holinshed thinks it should be only 800, whereas this letter says only six score: how this prodigious difference in numbers can be reconciled, I own I cannot form any conjecture. [Hume and the 'Pictorial History of England,' say May 22. That the statement of the loss is an absurd exaggeration there can be no doubt. The force on either side it seems was far from large; that of the Duke of York, according to Whethamstede, Abbot of St. Alban's, who appears to have been present, did not amount to more than 3000 men. Hallam, 'Middle Ages,' says, "surely this testimony outweighs a thousand ordinary chroniclers."]

Unto my worshipful and well-beloved cousin, John Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

Right worshipful and entirely well-beloved Sir, I recommend me unto you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare.

Furthermore letting you weet, as for such tidings as we have here, such three lords be dead, the Duke of Somerset,[1] the Earl

[1] Edmund Beaufort Duke of Somerset, &c.; he was

of Northumberland,[1] and the Lord Clifford,[2] and as for any other men of name, I known one, save only Quotton[3] (*Cotton*) of Cambridgeshire.

As for any other lords, many of them be hurt, and as for Fenyngley he liveth and fareth well, as far as I can inquire, &c.

And as for any great multitude of people that there was, as we can tell, there was at most slain (x) six score;[4] and as for the lords that were with the king, they and their men were pilled (*plundered*) and spoiled out of all their harness and horses; and as for what rule we shall have yet I weet not, save only there be made new certain officers.

My Lord of York[5] Constable of England; my Lord of Warwick[6] is made Captain of Calais; my Lord Burgchier[7] is made Treasurer of England; and as yet other tidings have I none.

And as for our sovereign lord, thanked be God he hath no great harm.

No more to you at this time, but I pray you send you this letter to my Mistress Paston when ye have seen it; praying you to remember my sister Margaret against the time that she shall be made a nun.

Written at Lamehith (*Lambeth*) on Whitsunday,[8] &c.

By your cousin, JOHN CRANE.

Lambeth,
Whitsunday, 25th of May, 1455. 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXXII.—(XXV. vol. i. p. 105.)

This letter, written in the beginning of June, gives a plain narrative of the state of affairs respecting both parties, immediately after the first battle of St. Alban's, which was fought on the 23rd [*22nd*] of May, 1455. William Worcester, the son of William de Worcester, and Elizabeth, the daughter of Thomas Botoner, was born at Bristol, about the year 1415, 3 H. V. was educated at Oxford, &c. at the expense of Sir John Fastolf, Kt. with whom he afterwards lived at Caister in Norfolk, and to whom he was esquire, historian, and executor. He sometimes styled himself William Botoner, and at other times William Botoner, al's Worcester. He was a man of great application to learning, versed in various sciences, and indefatigable in the study of the antiquities of this kingdom. He wrote many works, and was alive in 1480.

To William Worcester be this letter delivered in haste.

SIR, I recommend me to you, and as for tidings ye may inform mine master, that for new there is none but that he hath knowledge of.

But that the king, the queen and the prince, remove to Hertford to-morrow without fault; my Lord of York[5] to the Fryers at Ware; my Lord of Warwick[6] to Hunsdon; the Earl of Salisbury[9] to Rye; and there they shall abide to the time the parliament begins.[10]

The Duke of Buckingham[11] is come in, and sworn that he shall be ruled, and draw the line with them; and thereto he and his brothers be bound by recognizance in notable sums to abide the same.

The Earl of Wiltshire[12] sent to the lords, from a place of his called Petersfield, a letter desiring to know if he should come and abide about the king's person as he did before, and if he should not, then that they would license him to go into Ireland, and live there upon his lands, &c. And before this done, the lords were advised to have made him to

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some years Regent of Normandy, and in this battle commanded the royal army.

[1] Henry Percy Earl of Northumberland, had been a favourite with Henry V., and continued a loyal and faithful subject to his son Henry VI.: when slain he was about sixty years of age.

[2] Thomas Clifford Lord Clifford.

[3] William Quotton or Cotton, of Landwade, in Cambridgeshire, was vice-chamberlain to Henry VI.

[4] In the original letter the x is struck out, and vj placed after it in the same line.

[5] Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York.

[6] Richard Nevile, Earl of Warwick.

[7] Henry Bourchier, Viscount Bourchier.

[8] Whitsunday in 1445 fell on the 25th of May.

[9] Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury.

[10] The parliament was summoned to meet on Wednesday, 9th of July, 1455.

[11] Humphry Stafford Duke of Buckingham, &c., slain at Northampton in 1460.

[12] James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire, son and heir of James Butler, Earl of Ormond.

do as the Duke of Buckingham hath done and no more; but what that will fall now thereof, no man can tell as yet.

The Baron of Dudley[1] is in the Tower, what shall come of him God wot.

The Earl of Dorset[2] is in ward with the Earl of Warwick.

It was said, forsooth, that Harper and two other of the king's chamber,[3] were confederated to have sticked (*stabbed*) the Duke of York in the king's chamber, but it was not so, for they have cleared them thereof. But London upon the same tale arisen, [*has risen*] and every man to harness, on Corpus Christi even (*5th of June*), and much ado there was.

Sir William Oldhall abideth no longer in sanctuary than (*till*) the chief justice come; for (*at*) that time he shall go at large and sue all his matters himself, &c.

The Baron Dudley hath impeached many men; but what they be as yet we cannot weet.

Sir Philip Wentworth was in the field, and bore the king's standard, and cast it down and fled; my Lord of Norfolk[4] saith he shall be hanged therefore, and so is he worthy: he is in Suffolk now, he dares not come about the king.

Edmund Stendale was with Wenlock there in the field, and foully hurt.

Fylongley[5] is at home at his own place with his wife, and shall do right well, but we have a great loss of his absence this term, for it will be long ere he come this term, I am afraid.

All the lords that died at the journey (*battle*) are buried at St. Alban's.

Other things be none here, but ye shall see by Thomas Scales' letter the rule of the Frenchmen, &c.

God speed us well in our matters this term, I pray to God, who have you in his keeping, &c.

W. B.

London, June, 1455.
33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXXIII.—(LX. vol. iii. p. 241.)

This is a true picture of modern electioneering, and such a letter might be written from any county or town in the kingdom during the time that a choice for members was depending. The exact date of this letter cannot be ascertained; John Jenney was member for the city of Norwich in 1452, and again in 1477, but if this letter be addressed to John Paston the father, (and I rather think it is,) it must have been written I believe about 1455, when a parliament was summoned to meet in July. John Jenney, indeed, was not then returned, but that does not signify, as he seems to have doubts whether he should be so or not. He married Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Thomas Wetherby, the rich alderman of Norwich, who had been mayor in 1427, and 1432, and representative in parliament for that city in 1437, on whose decease, in 1445, he inherited the estate at Intwood, in right of his wife. He was afterwards deputy recorder and standing counsel for the city, and died in 1497. [We have not altered Fenn's arrangement, though we have no doubt that this letter refers to the same election as Letters lxxix. and lxxx. A parliament was summoned to meet on March, 6, 1452-3, and was dissolved Feb. 14, 1453-4. The next parliament met on July 9, 1455, and sat till Jan. 14, 1455-6. In Oct. 1454, a new parliament being expected, the Duke of Norfolk and Earl of Oxford agree upon two candidates; in June, 1455, the Duchess names both, and in this letter it appears the nomination was not agreeable to the freeholders. Jenney himself observes, "sum men holde it right straunge to be in this prlemt, and me thinketh they be wyse men that soo doo," which would certainly be the case in a parliament held so immediately after the battle of St. Alban's.]

To my worshipful master John Paston, Esquire.

My master Paston, I recommend me to you, and where(*as*) ye should be informed that I should say to Howard[6] that ye laboured to be knight of the shire, I said never so to him; I told my Lord of Norfolk at London that I laboured divers men for Sir Roger

[1] ——— Sutton, Baron Dudley.

[2] Henry Beaufort, Earl of Dorset, son and heir of the late Duke of Somerset. He is here styled only Earl of Dorset, though, by the death of his father at the battle of St. Alban's, he was now Duke of Somerset, &c.

[3] Grooms of the king's chamber.

[4] John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk; he died in 1461.

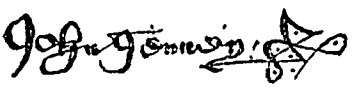
[5] He appears to have been a lawyer, and it seems as if he had been wounded in the battle of St. Alban's. [Is he not the Fenyngley of the preceding letter?]

[6] Howard was a relation to John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, whose character here appears to be that of a man who often talked without consideration.

Chamberlayn, and they said to me they would have him, but not Howard, inasmuch as he had no livelihood in the shire nor conversement (*acquaintance or intercourse*). And I asked them whom they would have, and they said they would have you, and thus I told him; and he said unadvisedly, as he can do full well; I might not say ye laboured therefore, for I heard never say ye laboured therefore by the faith I vowed to God.

As for this writ of the parliament of Norwich, I thank you that ye will labour therein; as for my friends there, I trust right well all the aldermen except Brown[1] and such as be in his danger;[2] I pray you speak to Walter Jeffery[3] and Harry Wilton,[4] and make them to labour to your intent. I pray you that if ye think that it will not be, that it like you to say that you move it of yourself, and not by my desire. Some men hold it right strange to be in this parliament,[5] and me thinketh they be wise men that so do. Written at Intwood,[6] on St. John's day, in haste.

Your servant,
JOHN JENNEY.



Intwood, St. John's day.
24th of June, about 1455.
33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXXIV.—(XXVI. vol. i. p. 109.)

This letter shows us, how the Duke of York's party endeavoured to throw the blame of the battle at St. Alban's upon each other; and that the parliament accused the Duke of Somerset, Thomas Thorpe, a Baron of the Exchequer, and William Joseph, Esq., as the cause of it, they having secreted (as it was said) from the king a conciliatory letter sent for him by the Duke of York. The unsettled state of the nation, and the violent commotions of the times, are plainly pointed out.

Unto my most faithful brethren, John Bocking, and William Worcester, and to either of them.

WORSHIPFUL Sir, and my most heartily and best-beloved brother, I recommend me unto you in more lowly wise than I can either think or write; and with all my service and and true heart thank you of your gentle letters, full brotherly written unto me at many times of old, and especial of late time passed. And truely, brother, I thank Almighty God of your welfare, of the which the bearer of this my poor letter certified me of, &c.

And, Sir, as touching all manner of new tidings, I know well ye are avarous (*eagerly desirous*); truly the day of making of this letter there were none new, but such (*as*) I heard of ye shall be served withal.

As for the first, the king, our sovereign lord, and all his true lords, stand in health of their bodies, but not all at hearts' ease as we.

Amongst other marvel, two days afore the writing of this letter there was a language between my Lords of Warwick[7] and Cromwell[8] afore the king; insomuch as the Lord Cromwell would have excused himself of all the stirring or moving of the male journey [*evil day*][9] of St. Alban's; of the which excuse making my Lord Warwick had knowledge, and in haste was with the king, and swore by his oath, that the Lord Cromwell said not truth, but that he was the beginner of all that journey at St. Alban's; and so between my said two Lords of Warwick and Cromwell there is at this day great grudging,

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[1] Richard Brown was mayor of Norwich in 1454, and member for that city in 1460.

[2] This means *in his debt*, and therefore under his influence.

[3] Walter Jeffery was under-sheriff of Norwich in 1451, 1452, and 1459.

[4] Henry Wilton was returned with J. Jenney, 1477.

[5] This must refer to the contests between the houses of York and Lancaster.

[6] This estate came afterwards by purchase to the Greshams, and here it was that, in 1549, Sir Thomas Gresham, knight, founder of the Royal Exchange, entertained John Dudley, the great Earl of Warwick, when he marched into Norfolk to attack Ket the rebel tanner.

[7] Richard Nevile, Earl of Warwick.

[8] Henry Stanhope, Lord Cromwell.

[9] [Fenn translates this *battle*; but he should have said *disastrous battle* to render the French *mal journée*. Indeed *journée* is used precisely like our day: we say the glorious day of Waterloo, the disastrous day at Fontenoy.]

insomuch as the Earl of Shrewsbury[1] hath lodged him at the hospital of St. James[2] beside the Mews,[3] by the Lord Cromwell's desire, for his safeguard.

And also all my Lord of Warwick's men, my Lord of York's men, and also my Lord of Salisbury's men, go with harness, and in harness, with strange weapons; and have stuffed their lords' barges full of weapons daily unto Westminster. And the day of making of this letter there was a proclamation made in the Chancery on the king's behalf, that no man should neither bear weapon nor wear harness defensible, &c.

Also the day afore the making of this letter there passed a bill both by the king, lords, and commons, putting Thorp, Joseph, and my Lord of Somerset in all the default; by the which bill, all manner of actions that should grow to any person or persons, for any offences at that journey done, in any manner of wise, should be extinct and void, affirming all things done there well done; and nothing done there never after this time to be spoken of; to the which bill many a man grudged full sore now it is passed.

And if I might be recommended unto my special master and yours, with all lowliness and true service, I beseech you heartily as I can.

And also to my brethren Th. Upton, Lodowick of Pole, William Lynd Calyn (*Lincoln*), and John Marshall.

No more, but our lord have you both in his perpetual keeping.

Written at London on St. Margaret's even in haste; and after this is read and understood, I pray you burn or break (*tear*) it, for I am loath to write anything of any lord, but I must needs, there is nothing else to write. Amen.

Your own HENRY WINDSOR.

London, Sunday, St. Margaret's day, 20th of July, 1455. 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXXV.—(LXI. vol. iii. p. 215.)

On the back of this letter in an ancient hand is written, "The Copie of Thearles of Warr and Salisbur l're whereby appere The Suspected Life of Tudenh'm Heydon and others." The persons here mentioned were steady Lancastrians, and I suppose immediately after the battle of St. Alban's, fought in May, applied to the Yorkists for that protection which here seems to have been granted to them. This protection appears, however, to have given offence to some of their own party, and therefore these directors of the king and government now found it necessary to qualify the terms granted by them to those in the opposite interest. These protections were certainly prudent, and showed that these noblemen well understood the best methods of drawing over those in the contrary party to their side. [While the Yorkists were in power no acts of vengeance were committed or allowed. It was thought the Lancastrians had suffered sufficiently in the loss of so many of their leaders in the battle, and the avowed principle of the Earl of Warwick was to spare the lower and middle classes as much as possible, and to select as victims only the nobility and higher classes, both in the battle-field and the justice-courts.]

The Earls of March, Warwick, and Salisbury.

RIGHT well beloved, we greet you well, and where[4] for the tender love that we have to the conservation of the king's peace, laws, and justice, in this his realm of England, we have commanded the king's people in his name, by our letters and divers writings, that no man should rob or despoil Sir Thomas Todenham, knight, John Heydon, John Wyndham, Harry Todenham, and John Andrews, and others, which have sued to us for our said letters; we, willing to eschew that any person should have colour by our said letters to noise us, or any of us, that the said Sir Thomas, John Heydon, John Wyndham, Harry, and John Andrews, or any other of suspected fame be accorded with us, or any of us, for such wrongs as they or any of them have done to us, our servants, and tenants, or well-willers, or that we should have them in tenderness or favour to discourage true peo-

[1] John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, (son of the famous General John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury,) was lord treasurer in 1456, and fell in the battle of Northampton, in 1460, fighting for the House of Lancaster.

[2] Now St. James's Palace.

[3] [A place for the keeping of hawks, afterwards the royal stables, and the site of which is now occupied by the barracks of the foot-guards, behind the National Gallery at Charing Cross.]

[4] [Whereas the use of the word is frequent.]

ple to sue against them by the law; we therefore notify to you, as we will that it be notified to all people, that we, nor none of us, intend not to favour or tender them, or any other of suspected fame, but rather to correct such by the law, for we made our said letters solely for keeping of the peace and justice, and not for favour of suspected conditions. And the Holy Trinity keep you. Written at London, the 23rd day of July.

To all Mayors, Sheriffs, Bailiffs, Constables, and all the King's Officers and Ministers in Norfolk, and each one of them.

London, Wednesday, 23rd of July, 1455. 33 H. VI.

LETTER LXXXVI.—(LXII. vol. iii. p. 247.)

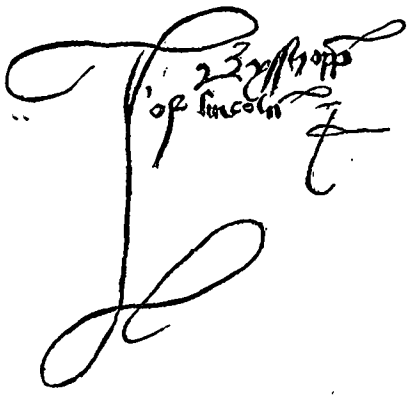
At the bottom of this letter is written in a hand of the time, "Litt. direct. Johī Paston ītr Michēm xxxiij. & xxxiiij Henr. sexti.," which ascertains the date. This letter contains nothing of any importance, but being written by a learned prelate, I thought it proper to insert it. John Chadworth was the second provost of King's College, in Cambridge, and succeeded to the see of Lincoln in 1452, soon after which he was joined in commission with William Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester, for reforming the statutes of both the colleges built by King Henry VI. at Eton and Cambridge. He died in 1471.

To the worshipful and well-beloved John Paston, Esquire.

RIGHT worshipful and well-beloved Sir, I commend me unto you, and with all my heart thank you for the great labours that ye of times have diligently done for my well-beloved servant John Ode, to the intent that he should mowe (*be able to*) attain to enter and enjoy peaceably his inheritance, as I am informed due unto him; and pray you of your good continuance, certifying you that I have written unto Yelverton the justice, that he would at some seasonable time commune with Sir Thomas Todenham, knight, and to offer him as much reason as it shall be thought unto him and to you that law will in that behalf require, praying you that ye will commune with the said Yelverton, and to conceive betwixt you such lawful means of guiding of this matter that my said servant may have peaceably without great trouble his said inheritance, as I shall in case semblable (*similar*) do my labour unto your pleasance (*pleasure*). And pray you that of the disposition of the said Sir Thomas Todenham in this behalf I may be certified; and Jesu preserve you. Written at London, the 26th day of July.

London, 26th of July, 1455. 33 H. VI.

J. *Bishop of Lincoln.*



LETTER LXXXVII.—(LXIII. vol. iii. p. 249.)

On the back of this letter is the following memorandum in an ancient hand: "A Copie of the Duke of N. L're wh^{ch} sheweth yt notable injuries wer comytted by the L. Scales and his adherents." This letter was written at a time when the king was under the direction of the Duke of York's party, about the year 1455, as it accuses the friends of the House of Lancaster of being guilty of riots and outrageous offences. It fairly shows the behaviour of the victorious party to those in the opposite interest, and speaks the language of those who had the king in their power. John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, died in 1461. For his curious Autograph see Letter xxxvii. From such orders as these, issued by the great men, we can judge better of the transactions of these turbulent times than from any regular history extant. [It appears to us, on the contrary, that this letter or notice displays remarkable moderation, and consequently a desire

for peace and justice only. Indeed, it is extraordinary how small an effect the contests of the rival houses appear to have produced on the domestic and social affairs of the time, as is proved by these as well as all other contemporaneous documents referring to private life, a clear proof that the war was carried on on both sides without any wanton or unnecessary cruelties, and on higher principles than merely factious or self-interested motives. The great mischief that was occasioned by these civil wars was the diverting of the energies of the people into an unproductive and wasteful course, unless the securing so high a degree of civil liberty as we attained to during and immediately after them, and which was a consequence of these contests, should be considered a sufficient recompense.]

The Duke of Norfolk.

BE it known to all the king's true liege people, the cause of our coming into this country is, by the commandment of the king our sovereign lord, for to inquire of such great riots, extortions, horrible wrongs, and hurts, as his highness is credibly informed be done in this country, and to know in certain, by you that know the truth, by what person or persons the said great riots, extortions, horrible wrongs, and hurts be done; wherefore we charge you all, on the king's behalf our sovereign lord, that ye spare neither for love, dread, nor fear that ye have to any person of what estate, degree, or condition he be, but that ye say the soth (*truth*) by whom such offences be done, and that ye spare no man that ye know guilty, and, by the faith that we owe to our sovereign lord, they shall be chastised after their desert, and it reformed as law requireth.

Also it is openly published that certain servants of the Lord Scales should in his name menace and put men in fear and dread to complain to us at this time of the said hurts and griefs, saying that we would abide but a short time here, and after our departing he would have the rule and governance as he hath had afore time. We let you weet that next the king our sovereign lord, by his good grace and licence, we will have the principal rule and governance through all this shire, of which we bear our name, while that we be living, as far as reason and law requireth, whosoever will grudge or say the contrary; for we will that the Lord Scales, Sir Thomas Todenham, Sir Miles Stapylton, and John Heydon have in knowledge, though our person be not daily here, they shall find our power here at all times to do the king our sovereign lord service, and to support and maintain you all in your right that be the king's true liege men; for it may not be said nay, but that here hath been the greatest riots, horrible wrongs, and offences done in these parts by the said Lord Scales, Thomas Todenham, Miles Stapylton, John Heydon, and such as be confederated unto them, that ever was seen in our days; and most mischief through their malicious purpose like to have fallen among the king's true liege people now late at Norwich, ne had we (*had we not*) better provided therefore; and also that God fortuned us to withstand their said malicious and evil disposed purpose.

Wherefore make bills of your grievance and come to us, and we shall bring you to the king's presence ourself, whose presence will be here in all the haste with the mercy of God, and see the reformation there of his own person.

LETTER LXXXVIII.—(XXVII. vol. i. p. 115.)

This letter seems to have been written on the 28th of October, 1455, as from the latter part of it (though imperfect) it appears that the king was at Hertford; reported to be sick again; and under the direction of the Lords of York, Warwick, and Salisbury, &c. All which agrees with our historical accounts of this period. We see in this letter a strong and diabolical instance of party fury; an old and an infirm man is, in the night, by a stratagem, enticed to open his gates; his place is robbed and plundered, and himself, after various ill treatment, is most cruelly murdered, by the direction of the son and heir of a nobleman then at variance with Lord Bonvile. [Scarcely, we think, of "party fury." Bonvile and Devonshire were both at that time Yorkists, for Devonshire did not openly go over to the Lancastrians till a little before the battle of Towton in 1461, where he first appeared in arms on their side.]

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, at Norwich, be this delivered.

PLEASE it your mastership to weet (*here follows an account of some law business, &c.*)

Here be many marvellous tales of things that shall fall this next month, as it is said; for

it is talked that one Doctor Grene a priest hath kalked (*calculated*), and reporteth that before St. Andrew's day next coming shall be the greatest battle that was since the battle of Shrewsbury,[1] and it shall fall between the Bishop's Inn of Salisbury[2] and Westminster Bars; and there shall die seven lords, whereof three should be bishops. All this and much more is talked and reported. I trust to God it shall not fall so!

Also there is great variance between the Earl of Devonshire[3] and the Lord Bonvile,[4] as hath been many day, and much debate is like to grow thereby; for on Thursday (*23rd of October*) at night last passed, the Earl of Devonshire's son and heir[5] came, with sixty men of arms, to Radford's Place[6] in Devonshire, which was of counsel with my Lord Bonvile; and they set an house on fire at Radford's gate, and cried and made a noise as though they had been sorry for the fire; and by that cause Radford's men set open the gates and yede (*went*) out to see the fire; and forthwith the Earl's son aforesaid entered into the place, and entreated Radford to come down of his chamber to speak with them, promising him that he should no bodily harm have; upon which promise he came down, and spoke with the said Earl's son: in the mean time his meny (*servants*) rob his chamber, and rifled his hutches,[7] and trussed such as they could get together and carried it away on his own horses: then the Earl's son said,—"Radford, thou must come to my lord, my father." He said he would, and bade one of his men make ready his horse to ride with them; which answered him that all his horses were taken away: then he said to the Earl's son, "Sir, your men have robbed my chamber, and they have mine horses, that I may not ride with you to my lord your father, wherefore I pray you let me ride, for I am old, and may not go."

It was answered him again that he should walk forth with them on his feet; and so he did till he was a flight[8] shot or more from his place, and then he was[9] . . . . . softly, for cause he might not go fast, and when they were thus departed he turned . . . . . forthwith came nine men again upon him and smote him on the head and felled . . . . of them cut his throat.

This was told to my Lord Chancellor this forenoon . . . . . messengers, as come of purpose out of the same country. This matter is taken greatly . . . . . passed at two after midnight rode out of London as it is said more than . . . . . the best wise. Some say it was to ride toward my Lord of York, and some . . . . so much rumour is here, what it meaneth I wot not, God turn it . . . . . at Hertford,[10] and some men are afraid that he is sick again, I pray God . . . . . my Lords of York, Warwick, Salisbury, and others are in purpose to convey him . . . . &c.

The said Nicholas Crome, bearer hereof, shall tell you such tidings . . . in haste at London on Saint Simon's day and Jude.

Your poor JAMES GRESHAM.

London, Tuesday, 28th of October, 1455. 34 H. VI.

[1] The battle of Shrewsbury was fought on the 22nd of July, 1403, 4 H. IV. the Percies being the leaders of the malcontents, who were routed by the king's army. The predictions, however, of Dr. Grene were not fulfilled, but prophecies, in this credulous age, had great influence over the minds of the people; and there having been already some civil contests, they were easily induced to believe that others might be foreseen and foretold.

[2] [The "Bishoppes Inne of Salesbury" was situated in the Strand, where Salisbury Street is now. Westminster Bars was probably the city of London gates towards Westminster, as Westminster itself was never walled.]

[3] Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, was beheaded by order of Edward IV. immediately after the battle of Towton, in 1461.

[4] William Bonvile was created Lord Bonvile in 1449, and was beheaded, by order of Queen Margaret, after the battle at Barnard's Heath, near St. Alban's, in February, 1460-1, though he had staid with Henry VI. on a promise of safety.

[5] Thomas Courtney, son and heir of Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, was beheaded very soon after his father, in 1461.

[6] Nicholas Radford was an eminent lawyer, and resided at Poghill, near Kyrton.

[7] Huche, French, a coffer or chest standing upon legs.

[8] A flight was a particular kind of arrow called flecta, in the Latin of the middle ages.

[9] Where the lines are supplied with dots the original letter is imperfect, from a part being decayed and torn off.

[10] The king seems at the time this letter was written to have been at Hertford, and it was reported that he was sick again.

LETTER LXXXIX.—(LXIV. vol iii. p. 253.)

[From this letter it would appear the London Road had not a good country reputation for security. The most curious circumstance, however, is, that neither in Norwich nor in all Suffolk was there to be procured a sufficient quantity of cloth of a required colour for the male retainers of a private gentleman's family.] Of the liveries Sir John Fenn says:—"A very ingenious and learned friend of mine has suggested to me that the honourable and ancient families of this land were formerly guided in the colours of their liveries by the metals and colours in which their arms were blazoned; his suggestion is here verified, for the arms of Paston were, argent, sox fleurs de lys azure, and a chief indented or: if therefore russet or grey may be equivalent to argent, the murrey and the blue are the identical or and azure of the arms.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me unto you, pleaseth you to weet that mine aunt Moundford[1] hath desired me to write to you, beseeching you that ye will vouchsafe to chevise (*provide*) for her at London twenty marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) for to be paid to Master Ponyngs,[2] either on Saturday or Sunday, which shall be St. Andrew's day, in discharging of them that be bounden to Master Ponyngs of the said twenty marks for the wardship[3] of her daughter, the which twenty marks she hath delivered to me in gold for you to have at your coming home, for she dare not adventure her money to be brought up to London for fear of robbing, for it is said here that there goeth many thieves betwixt this and London, which causeth her to beseech you to content the said money in discharging of the matter and of them that be bounden, for she would for no good that the day were broken; and she thanketh you heartily for the great labour and business that ye have had in that matter, and in all others touching her and hers, wherefore she saith she is ever bounden to be your beadswoman,[4] and ever will be while she liveth.

My cousin, her son, and his wife recommendeth them unto you, beseeching you that ye will vouchsafe to be their good master, as ye have been aforetime; for they be informed that Daniel is come to Rising Castle, and his men make their boast that their master shall be again at Brayston within short time.

Furthermore, as for the matter that my son wrote to me for the box whereon was written *False Carte Sproute*, that I should inquire of William Worcester where it were; the said William was not at home since that I had his letter, but as soon as he cometh home I shall inquire of him, and send you an answer.

As touching for your liveries, there can none be gotten here of that colour that ye would have of, neither murrey, nor blue, nor good russet, underneath 3*s.* the yard at the lowest price, and yet is there not enough of one cloth and colour to serve you: and as for to be purveyed in Suffolk, it will not be purveyed not now against the time, without they had had warning at Michaelmas, as I am informed: and the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, on St. Katherine's day.

By your
MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, 25th of November,
1455, or 1460. 34 or 39 H.

N. B. St. Andrew's day fell on a Sunday, in the years 1455 and 1460; this letter was therefore most probably written in one of these years.

LETTER XC.—(LXV. vol. iii. p. 357.)

[This letter is from W. Botoner, (Worcester) to John Paston, and contains nothing of interest. The principal matter is that Sir John Fastolf is desirous of making his will, and he, Botoner, is desirous that Paston should be present.]

[1] Osbert Moundford, Esq., of Hockwold, married Elizabeth, daughter of John Berney, Esq., and by her had Mary, their daughter and sole heir, who married Sir William Tindale, Knight of the Bath.

[2] [Frequently spelt Poynings.]

[3] [The statute of wardship, a most oppressive and unjust law, was abolished by the 12th Chas. II.]

[4] A beadsman or beadswoman was a person employed in praying, though generally in praying for another.

LETTER XCI.—(XXVIII. vol. i. p. 121.)

To the worshipful Sir, and my right well-beloved cousin John Paston, and in his absence to John Bocking, or William Barker.

WORSHIPFUL Sir and cousin, I recommend me to you, and like you to weet that I have a tally[1] with my cousin Fenn[2] of 500 marks (333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and more, for to be changed upon such places as a man might have most speedy payment; and I pray you heartily to commune with the said Fenn, that I might be ensured of the said tally to be exchanged, and for what reward competent to be given upon the same I will [*shall* or *should*] agree to it.

Item, I desire to know who be the residue, the remanent, of the co-executors of the Lord Willoughby,[3] now the Lord Cromwell[4] is deceased; for this cause it was so, that there was due to the Lord Willoughby and to me 10,000 marks (6666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) for a reward to be paid of my Lord Bedford's[5] goods, for the taking of the Duke of Alençon.[6]

And the said Lord Willoughby had but 1000 marks (666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) paid, and I 1000 marks (666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) so 8000 (5333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) leveth (*remaineth*) yet to pay; of which sum, 4000 (2666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) must grow to the executors of the said Lord Willoughby to dispose.

And therefore I desire that the executors, and such as most have interest in the Lord Willoughby's goods, may be communed with; that they may make pursuit for payment of the said 4000 marks, for his part to be had, and I shall make for my part.

And (*if*) Master Nevile, the which hath wedded my Lady Willoughby, have power or interest to receive the Lord Willoughby's debts, then he to be laboured unto. And my Lord of Salisbury[7] will be a great helper in this cause.

The king, which is supervisor of my Lord Bedford's testament, hath written and commanded by sundry letters that the said Lord Willoughby should be content for his part; and so much the matter is the forwarder.

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[1] A taille or tally was a cleft stick, both parts of which were notched according to the sum of money advanced, and of which one part was given to the creditor, whilst the other remained with the debtor. Hence the tallier of the Exchequer, now called the teller. Sir John Fastolf had entrusted a tally with his cousin Fenn, and was desirous of knowing what reasonable discount he should allow for receiving ready money upon this security.

[2] Hugh Fenne, of Yorkshire, was slain in battle during the contest between Richard II. and Henry IV. about 1399, when he forfeited his lands. His son Hugh had estates in Essex and Middlesex, where his descendants flourished for several generations: this family then branched off into Suffolk and Norfolk, in both which counties they acquired possessions. The person mentioned in this letter was either the son or grandson (for they were both named Hugh,) of the Hugh Fenne, of Yorkshire, and seems, from the manner in which he is several times mentioned both by Sir J. Fastolf and J. Paston, to have been a lawyer. He was, in 1459, a supervisor of Sir J. Fastolf's will. [This Fenn was the ancestor of Sir John Fenn, the original editor of these letters. Leaving only a daughter: the family name became extinct in Norfolk on the death of Sir John.]

[3] Robert Willoughby, Lord Willoughby, an eminent commander, was present at the famous battle of Agincourt, in 1415; and also commanded under the Duke of Bedford at the battle of Verneuil, in the province of Normandy, in 1424, where he and Sir John Fastolf had the honour of taking the Duke of Alençon prisoner, as appears by this letter. The writers of Sir J. Fastolf's life in the 'Biographia Britannica' give an account of his having taken a French general, but are in doubt both as to the person taken, and likewise in what engagement.

[4] Henry Lord Cromwell, whose sister, and now co-heir, Lord Willoughby had married. She was at this time the wife of Sir Thomas Nevile.

[5] John Plantagenet, Duke of Bedford, and Regent of France, third son of Henry IV. This great man died at Paris, in 1435, and was buried at Rouen. It may be supposed that the ransom was paid into his hands as commander-in-chief, and that, in that character, he was entitled to a considerable share of it, though it appears from this account that he had detained most of it; for even now, at the distance of twenty years from his death, the Lord Willoughby and Sir J. Fastolf had received only 1000 marks each.

[6] John II. Duke of Alençon, son of him slain at Agincourt, was born in 1409, and taken prisoner at the battle of Verneuil, in 1424. He was detained a prisoner three years, but released at the intercession of the Duke of Burgundy, on paying a ransom of 200,000 crowns. He afterwards was convicted of treasons towards his own sovereigns, and died in prison in 1476.

[7] Richard Nevile Earl of Salisbury, married Alice, daughter and heir of Thomas Montague, the great Earl of Salisbury, who had the principal command under the Duke of Bedford at Verneuil, and who died in 1428.

And there is one Young, a servant of the Lord Willoughby, which pursued this matter; if he were in London he could give good information upon this matter.

I pray you write to me how my matters do, and of such novelties as ye have there, and our Lord have you in his keeping.

Written at Caister hastily, the 5th day of February, in the 34th year of King Henry VIth.

Your cousin, JOHN FASTOLF.

Caister,
Wednesday,
5th of February, 1454. 34 H. VI.

NUMBER XCII.—(LXVI. vol. iii. p. 261.)

As there are not only several letters in this collection of the hand-writing of that renowned warrior Sir John Fastolf, but as he is likewise mentioned in many others, I thought the two following statements of sums of money due to him from the crown would be acceptable to the reader, as they ascertain several of his enterprizes in France, and point out to us the two prisoners which he took in the French wars, and who, by the large sums agreed to be paid for their ransom, must have been persons of great consequence in the military line. This first declaration relates to money due to him on the account of the wars and transactions both in England and in France. The second states the injuries and losses which he had sustained in France. There is no date to either of them, but from the mention of the time since his last return from France, and which, from an account of his life, appears to have been in the year 1440, these representations were made in the year 1455. 33 H. VI.

Billa de debitis Regis in partibus Franciæ Johanni Fastolf, militi, debitis.

THESE be the injuries, losses, and damages that the said Fastolf hath had, as well within the realm of England as in other parts in manner and form as it ensueth:—

	£.	s.	d.
First, it is to consider how that the said Fastolf hath been vexed and troubled since he came last into this land by the might and power of the Duke of Suffolk,[1] and by the labour of his counsel and servants in divers wise, as in great oppressions, grievous and outrageous amercements, and many great horrible extortions, as it may appear more plainly by a roll of articles thereupon made, the damages of which extend to the sum of 5000 marks. . =	3333	6	8
Item, the said Fastolf hath been greatly damaged and hurt by the might and power of the said Duke of Suffolk and his counsel, in disseising and taking away a manor of the said Fastolf's, called Dedham, in the county of Essex, to the value of 100 marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) of yearly rent, which was holden from the said Fastolf by the term of three year day and more, to his great hurt, with 200 marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) in costs expended in recovery of the same, the sum in all . . . . 500 marks =	333	6	8
Item, there is cast into the king's hands by untrue forged offices and inquisitions, supposed to be found by divers escheators in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, three certain manors of the said Fastolf, to the value of 100 marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) yearly, which said offices and inquisitions were never duly found, but forged by untrue imaginations, and means of certain persons his evil willers, as it hath been confessed by those that were appointed and named to be upon the inquests. And by the malicious labour of his said evil willers, the said manors have been troubled and put in plea this four year day and more, to the damage and			

[1] Many of the letters in this collection mention the disputes between the Duke of Suffolk and Sir John Fastolf concerning different manors and estates.

	£.	s.	d.
costs of the said Fastolf, the sum of 500 marks . . =	333	6	8

Item, the said Fastolf having the gift of the baronies and lordship of Sillie Guill'm[1] and Lasuze, in the county of Mayne, to him and to his assigns for ever, the which were gotten by the said Fastolf, and no charge to the king, for the value and denomberment (*number*) of 4000 saluts[2] of yearly rent, he was commanded by the king's letters to deliver up the said baronies and lordship to the king's commissioners, promising him by the king's commandment to be recompensed therefore, as the said Fastolf hath to show, and he not recompensed nor rewarded nothing for the leaving of his said baronies and lordship, to the damages of the said Fastolf of the sum of 2500 marks = 1666 13 4

Item, whereas the said Fastolf had a prisoner of his own taking, called Guill'm Remond,[3] which was ransomed, and agreed to pay him for his ransom with the marks the sum of 3200 saluts, the prisoner, without knowledge or licence of the said Fastolf, was taken away from him by the Duke of Bedford, then being the king's regent of France, and with the said prisoner he caused the town of Compeyn, then lying in the French party's governance, for to be yielded to the king, and to his said regent in his name; and the said Fastolf, after long pursuits made to the king and his council, was recompensed but to the value of 1600 saluts in lands in Normandy, when they fortuned to fall into the king's hands, which lands he hath also lost; and also the said Fastolf hath lost the residue of the said ransom, besides the said lands, to the sum of 4000 marks . . . . . = 2666 13 4

Item, the said Fastolf is yet owing for his portion and part for the recompense and reward that should grow and be due to him for the taking of John, calling himself Duke of Alançon, at the battle of Verneuil,[4] which that paid for his ransom 40,000 marks (26,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) which reward, beside the Lord Willoughby's part, should extend to the sum of 4000 marks = 2666 13 4

Item, is due to the said Fastolf, by the execution of the last will and testament of John Duke of Bedford,[5] whose soul God assoil! for prests and other charges for safeguard and keeping of certain fortresses, castles, and towns, and for other costs, prests, and charges by him borne in his service, as it may appear in certain articles written in a roll particularly of the same, the sum of . 4599 marks 5*s.* 6*d.* = 3066 3 6

Sum total
21,099 marks 5*s.* 6*d.* = 14066 5 6

Item, since the last coming[6] over of the said Fastolf into this realm, as by the space of fifteen years and more, he hath borne great costs, charges, and expenses, at all times attending upon the king's highness, and the lords of his council, as he hath had in commandment, and was his part to do, for the which, and for all the service that he hath

[1] Sir John took the castle of Sillie le Guillem in 1425, and from which he was dignified with the title of baron.

[2] The salute was a gold coin of Henry VI., current in France for 1*l.* 5*s.* English.

[3] In 1423 he took the castle of Pacy, the governor whereof was Guilliaume Reymond.

[4] This battle was fought in 1424.

[5] See previous letter of Sir J. Fastolf's.

[6] Sir John finally left France in 1440, this account therefore was drawn up in 1455. 33 H. VI.

done to the right noble prince King Harry the IVth. aieul (*grandfather*) to our sovereign lord that now is, and to the most victorious prince and king his father, whose souls God assoil, and also to our said sovereign lord, he hath had neither fee, wages, reward, nor recompense in this his realm of England, but hath borne it of his own proper goods at all times to the king's honour and profit, as to his power, which is to him right grievous and chargeable, trusting to have been considered and rewarded as other men of such deserving have been in the times of the right noble progenitors of our said sovereign lords late kings of this said realm.

1455. 33 H. VI.

NUMBER XCIII.—(LXVII. vol. iii. p. 269.)

A declaration of the costs which Sir John Fastolf was at, being without this realm.

THE declaration of certain prests, (*loans*) costs, and charges, done and borne by Sir John Fastolf, as well in the time of the most noble and victorious princes of blessed memory, King Harry the IVth., King Harry the Vth., as in the time of our sovereign lord king that now is, in his wars beyond the sea, as by the articles that follow more plainly appeareth.

	£.	s.	d.
First, it is to be remembered that to the said Fastolf is owing for divers costs and charges by him borne for the time that he occupied the office of the constabulary of Bourdeaux, for the safeguard of the king's duchy of Guienne, as it appeareth plainly by account made of the said office of constabulary remaining in the king's exchequer at Westminster of record, whereof he yet neither had payment nor assignment, the sum of . . .	227	15	3½
Item, in like wise there is owing to the said Fastolf for wages for his service done to the king, and to the Duke of Clarence, being the king's lieutenant in the said duchy of Guienne, as it may appear under sufficient writing, the sum of	202	10	0
Item, in like wise is owing to the said Fastolf for costs and charges that he bare when he was lieutenant of the town of Harfleur,[1] in Normandy, as it showeth by a debenture made to the said Fastolf with him remaining.	133	6	8
Item, in like wise is owing to the said Fastolf for the keeping and victualling of the Bastile[2] of St. Anthony in Paris, as it appeareth by writing sufficient, and by the creditors of Sir John Tyrel,[3] knight, late treasurer of the king's house, remaining in the exchequer of Westminister of record, the sum of	42	0	0
Item, there is owing to the said Fastolf for the safeguard of the town of Pount Melank[4] in the parts of France, as it appeareth by account thereof, made in the king's exchequer of England of record, the sum of	89	10	4¾
Sum m[l] xlij marks ix sh. i farthing.			

And in semblable wise over all this is owing to the said Fastolf for prests and wages of him and his retinues being in the king's service, in his

[1] Sir John Fastolf was lieutenant of Harfleur in 1415.

[2] The foundation of this since terrible prison was laid by Hugh Aubriot on the 22nd of April, 1369, 43 of our King Edward III. and the 6th of Charles V. of France.

[3] He was grandfather to Sir James Tyrel, the supposed murderer of Edward V. and his brother.

[4] Port Meulent was taken in 1422.

realm of France, and duchy of Normandy,[1] as well about the safeguard and governance of his towns, castles, and fortresses of Alençon, Fresney le Vicomte, Verneuil, Honnefleet,[2] as for other great causes and charges borne and paid in the king our sovereign lord's days that now is, for the advancement of his conquest, the good and utility of him, of his said realm and duchy aforesaid, as it appeareth openly by accounts made in the Chamber of Accounts of Paris and Roan, whereof the vidimus remain with the said Fastolf, and also by certain debentures containing the said sums, ready to show, whereof the said Fastolf hitherto hath had neither payment nor assignation,

	£.	s.	d.
The sum of v m^{l} iiij^{xx} ij marks xiij sh. iij^{d} ob. sterling=	3388	13	3½
Sum total vj m^{l} cxxv marks, ix sh. iij. farthings sterling=	4083	15	7¾

1455. 33 H. VI.

LETTER XCIV.—(XXIX. vol. i. p. 125.)

This letter is written by the secretary, and concluded and subscribed by the hand of that great prelate, cardinal, and lord chancellor, Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury; who is recorded to have been a principal means of introducing the art of printing into England. He was elected archbishop in 1454. 32 H. VI. was a man of considerable learning, and died in 1486. 2 H. VII. at an advanced age.

To the right worshipful, and my right entirely well-beloved Sir John Fastolf, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful, and my right entirely well beloved, I greet you right heartily well; thanking you specially, and in full hearty wise, for the very gentle goodness that ye showed unto me at all times, praying you of good continuance.

And as touching such matters as ye sent unto me for, I trust to God verily, insomuch as the rule[3] is amended here, and the weather waxeth seasonable and pleasant, to see you in these parts within short time; at which time I shall commune and demean unto you [*act towards you*] in such wise that ye shall be right well pleased.

And as for the matter concerning my Lord of Bedford,[4] think it not contrary but that ye shall find me heartily well-willed to do that I can or may for the accomplishment of your desire, as well in that matter as in other like, as your servant John Bocking, bearer hereof, can clearlier report unto you on my behalf, to whom like it you to give faith and credence in this part; and the blessed Trinity have you everlastingly in his keeping.

Written in my manor of Lamehith (*Lambeth*) the 27th day of March.

Your faithful and true,
THOMAS CANT.

Lambeth, 27th of March,
between 1454, and 1459. 33 and 37 H. VI.

[1] Sir John was several years governor of Normandy, I believe from about 1427 to 1440, when he left France.

[2] [So in original; Fenn gives it in the form of Honnefleet, having previously given "Fresney, Le Vicounte" as two places. There is little doubt of the place meant being Honfleur, at the mouth of the Seine, opposite Harfleur.]

[3] This may apply either to some change in the administration, or only in the management of the house.

[4] There was no Duke of Bedford between 1435 and 1470. This must therefore relate to some matter which had formerly passed between Sir John Fastolf and John Plantagenet, Duke of Bedford, and Regent of France, who died in 1435; perhaps it related to the ransom of the Duke of Alençon. Sir John served long under him in France.

LETTER XCV.—(LXVIII. vol. iii. p. 277.)

This letter was most probably written during the time that the archbishop was lord chancellor, and it may be supposed that this Robert Offord had been tried and acquitted upon an indictment for the murder, and that, now the next of kin to the deceased, not being satisfied with the verdict, had lodged his appeal.

To our right trusty and right well-beloved John Paston, Esq., and William Norwich, and to either of them.

RIGHT trusty and right well beloved, we greet you heartily well; and whereas Sir Nichol Bowet, knt., sueth an appeal in the county of Norfolk against one Robert Offord of Barking, for the death of one Sir Henry Bowet, clerk; we, being informed that the matter is piteous, pray you heartily that ye will in our behalf move and entreat the sheriff of the said county to surcease of the execution of any process upon the exigent[1] to him directed in that behalf unto the next term, so that reasonable means may be found to save the said Robert harmless; letting him weet that we have written to the said Sir Nichol for a convenient treaty to be taken in that behalf, as shall be thought according to right. And God have you ever in his keeping.

Written in our manor of Mortlake, the 7th day of September.

T. { ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.[2]

Mortlake, in Surry, 7th of September, between 1455 and 1458. 34 and 37 H. VI.

LETTER XCVI.—(LXIX. vol. iii. p. 279.)

This letter has no direction, and is only subscribed with the initials H. W.; from the hand-writing, however, it appears to have been written by Henry Windsor, and by the contents we may discover it was addressed to J. Paston. The character he gives of his master, Sir John Fastolf, is not a very pleasing one, and from his saying that whatever is done will "be called your dede," it appears to have been sent to J. Paston in the latter part of Sir John Fastolf's life, when his cousin Paston transacted most of his business. [But it evidently appears that H. W. was more anxious to avoid publicity for his own sake than for either his master or Paston. The letter is very obscurely expressed, probably on purpose.]

AFTER humble and due recommendation, please it your good mastership to understand that at making of this my poor letter, there were no novelties with us but such as ye understood full well afore your departing, except the king will into Scotland in all manner wise of war, and that my Lord of Wiltshire shall be made chancellor. I suppose the better[3] is but a slander, and therefore be ye advised how ye deliver them as tidings.

Also I weet full well where I left you in such matters as it pleased you to make me of your counsel, as touching one matter specially, and how that ye said unto me, when I desired your good mastership to show favour, such as ye best might if anything should be showed ad lumen, my master F. (*Fastolf*) except, and how that ye answered and said, as it pleased you, that I was conquered, in truth that should prove but a full great unstableness in me, with more, &c. But, Sir, I pray you, howsomever my master reckoneth with any of his servants, bring not the matter in revolution in the open court, for and (*if*) it were once opened before the judges how that any letters patent should be purchased of an ante date, and the default found in me, ye woul be a thousand times advised, and my master F. (*Fastolf*) both, ere that ye would amend me so much as I should be appered (*impaired*) thereby; and therefore I beseech you be well advised how that matter be opened for my ease.

I was not desired to write unto you of no one person, so God be my help, yourself except; but I would ye would take advice and counsel of the priest that had you so

[1] The exigent is a writ requiring the appearance of the party, and if he come not at the last proclamation he is outlawed.

[2] Thomas Bourchier, Abp. of Canterbury, from 1454 to 1486, and Lord Chancellor from 1455 to 1457.

[3] [A mistake apparently for *latter* or *letter*.]

long under hands on Shor Thursday,[1] when I and my fellowship, God thank you, had of you right great cheer to our great comfort and your great cost, how that the same priest understandeth this letter of the gospel under written, "Jesus dixit Simoni Petro, si peccavit in te frater tuus, vade et corripe eum inter te et ipsum solum; si te audierit lucratus es fratrem tuum, si autem te non audierit adhibe tecum adhuc unum vel duos, ut in ore duorum vel trium testium stet omne verbum. Quod si non audierit, dic ecclesiæ, si autem ecclesiam non audierit sit tibi sicut ethinicus et publicanus,"[2] &c. And in another place "Tunc accedens Petrus ad Jesum dixit, Domine, quotiens petevit (*quoties peccabit*) in me frater meus, dimittam ei usque septies? Dicti illi Jesu, non dico tibi usque septies, sed usque septuagesies septies."[3]

My master can do nothing, the which shall come in open audience at these days, but it shall be called your deed, and it is not unknown that cruel and vengible (*revengeful*) he hath been ever, and for the most part without pity and mercy, I can no more, but "vade et corripe eum," for truly he cannot bring about his matters in this word (*world*) for the word (*world*) is not for him; I suppose it will not change yet by likeliness, but I beseech you, Sir, help not to amend him only, but every other man, if ye know any more misdisposed.

I can no more, but as I can or may shall be his servant and yours unto such time as ye will command me to surcease and leave off, if it please him.

Sir, I pray you take this copy of your statute, it is not examined by me, for I found it these five years passed.

Written in my sleeping time,[4] at afternoon, on Whitsunday. Also, Sir, if I have rehearsed wittingly the text of the gospel singularly unto your mastership, I beseech you to be had excused.

Your own H. W.

Whitsunday, May or June,
between 1455 and 1459.
33 and 38 H. VI.

LETTER XCVII.—(XXX. vol. i. p. 129.)

This letter, though it contains no historical or memorable event, exhibits the dutiful style of a son to a father [in law], and on that account deserves to be read; it was written between 1455, when John succeeded his father William as Lord Lovell, and 1460, when Lord Beaumont was slain. John Lord Lovell married Jane, daughter of Viscount Beaumont, and at length heir to her brothers William and Henry, who both succeeded to the title, but died without issue. Lord Lovell died in 1464, leaving his son and heir, Francis Lord Lovell, who was Lord Chamberlain to King Richard III., and attended him at the battle of Bosworth field.

To my right worshipful, and my most best-beloved lord father, my Lord Beaumont.

Right worshipful, and my most best-beloved lord father, I recommend me unto your good lordship; please it you to weet, I have conceived your writing right well, and forasmuch as ye desire the stewardship of Baggeworth for your well-beloved Thomas Everingham, which I trow verily be right a good and a faithful gentleman. Howbeit, my lord your desire shall be had in all that is in me; and at the instance of your lordship, I, by the advice of my council, shall give it him in writing, under such form as shall please you; wherein I would be glad to do that that might please your good lordship, praying you right heartily ye would be mine especial good lord and father in all such as ye can think should grow to my worship or profit in any wise, as my singular trust is

[1] Shere or Shore Thursday, Maundy Thursday, the day before Good Friday.

[2] St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. xviii. v. 15, 16, 17, and v. 21, 22.

[3] This relates to papers sent with this letter, and accounts for there being no direction, as the whole was enclosed in a parcel.

[4] We are here made acquainted with the custom of H. Windsor, of sleeping after dinner at afternoon; perhaps as the hours of rising were early, it might be usual for people in general to do so, as it is still practised in the families of many early rising farmers, &c. [This guess does not appear very probable; nor, we think, is the practice much known among farmers. "Slepying tyme" is more likely to have been here used as leisure time.]

most in you, and I alway ready to do you service with God's grace, who have you, my right worshipful and my most best-beloved lord father, ever in his blessed keeping.

Written at Rotherfield Gray, the 24th day of July, &c.

Furthermore, my lord, and it like you, my lady my mother recommended her unto your good lordship, in whom her most faith and trust is in, praying you ye will be good brother unto her, for she hath taken you for her chief counsel, &c.

JOHN LORD LOVELL.

Rotherfield Gray, in Oxfordshire.
24th of July, between 1455 and 1460.
34 and 39 H. VI.

LETTER XCVIII.—(LXX. vol. iii. p. 283.)

To us who live in these days those lawless proceedings seem terrible, but in the tumultuous times here treated of such occurrences were too frequent; and the period here exhibited, distracted by civil dissensions, made them still more common. This letter must have been written between 1455, 33 H. VI. and 1460, 39 H. VI. [But this statement is only that of one party, who himself appears very willing to have recourse to the violence of which he complains. It is also clear by the man being sent to Lincoln Castle, and from the application for his being bailed out, that there was *some* legal form observed; the hanging also was to be effected only by "setting a sessions." In these times the active partisans had many opportunities, no doubt, of committing great oppression, but they do not appear to be customary or even numerous, as Sir John would make it appear, and usually by form of law at least, though sometimes no doubt the form was made the instrument of injustice.]

To my right honourable and right worshipful lord, my Lord Viscount Beaumont.

RIGHT honourable and my right worshipful lord, I recommend me unto your good lordship with all my service, ever more desiring to hear of your prosperity and welfare, the which I pray God encrease and continue to his pleasure, and after your own heart's desire; thanking you of the good lordship that ye have showed me at all times, beseeching you alway of good continuance.

Please it your good lordship to be remembered how afore this time Hugh Wytham hath said he would be in rest and peace with me, and not to malign against me otherwise than law and right would; that notwithstanding, upon Monday last past, he and three men with him came into a servant's house of mine in Boston, called William Sheriff, and there, as he sat at his work, struck him upon the head and in the body with a dagger, and wounded him sore, and pulled him out of his house, and set him in prison without any cause reasonable, or without writ, or any other process showed unto him; and that me seems longs (*belongs*) not for him to do, but as he says he is indicted, and as your good lordship knows well, I and all my servants are in like wise, but an any man should have done it, it longs either to the sheriff or to your bailiff, as I conceive, and other cause he had none to him as far as I can know, but only for the maliciousness of that he hath unto me, nor I can think none other but it is so. And now yesternight my Lord Welles came to Boston with four score horses, and in the morning following, took him out of prison, saying afore all people, "false thief thou shalt be hanged, and as many of thy master's men as may be gotten," as your servant John Abbott can report unto your good lordship, and hath taken him away with him to Tattershall, what to do with him I cannot say, but, as I suppose, to have him to Lincoln Castle; wherefore I beseech your good lordship in this matter to be my good lord, and that it please your good lordship to write a letter to the keeper of the castle of Lincoln, that it liked him to deliver him out of prison under a sufficient surety had for him, for and (*if*) they may keep him still by this mean they may take all the servants that I have, and so I may do again in like wise.

And also, as I am informed, without he be had out of prison in haste, it will be right grievous to him to heal of his hurt, he is so sore stricken; and if there be any service that your good lordship will command me to do in any country, please it you to send me word, and it shall be done to my power with the grace of God, which have you, my right honourable and worshipful lord, alway in his blessed keeping. Written at Kyme, upon Wednesday next after our Lady's day, the Assumption, (*15th August.*)

Also, please it your good lordship to weet,

after this letter was made there came a man from Tattershall into my fenn, which ought me good will, and because he would not be holden suspect, he spoke with women which were milking kyne, and bade them go to a priest of mine to Dokdyke, and bid him fast go [*and*] give me warning, how that my Lord Willoughby,[1] my Lord Cromwell,[2] and my Lord Welles[3] proposed then to set a sessions, and hang the said William Sheriff, an they might bring the intent about; and so, as I and your servant John Abbott stood together, the priest came and gave me warning hereof, which I trust for my worship your good lordship would not should happen, for it were to me the greatest shame that might fall, but and [*unless*] it please your good lordship to write to all your servants in this country that they will be ready upon a day's warning to come when I send them word; I trust to God they shall not hang him against the law, but I, with help of your good lordship, shall be able to let [*prevent*] it.

By your servant,
WILLIAM TAILBOYS.[4]

Kyme, in Lincolnshire, Wednesday,
August, between 1455 and 1460.
33 and 39 H. VI.

LETTER XCIX.—(LXXI. vol. iii. p. 289.)

This letter shows the terrible effects of civil commotions to individuals, who rise or fall as their party gains or loses any advantage. This Earl of Oxford and Sir Thomas Todenham were afterwards beheaded in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV. [The "terrible effects" are certainly not shown in this letter. The Lancastrian party were probably in power when it was written, and idle rumours were raised of what they were likely to do; but nothing of all this took place. Sir Thomas Todenham appears throughout to have been an active Lancastrian, and was beheaded, after conviction, with Oxford and others for a treasonable intercourse with Queen Margaret. See Letter lxxvi.]

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, praying you to weet that there is a great noise in this town, that my Lord of Oxford and Yelverton and ye be endited in Kent for maintaining of the oyer and determiner,[5] and John Damme is indited there also of treason, because that he did Heydon inditen of treason for taking down of the quarter of the man; and the people that be against Sir Thomas Todenham, and Heydon be sore afraid because of this noise, and of other language that is had both in this town and in the country, that these said Todenham and Heydon should be as well at ease, and have as great rule as ever they had.

James Gloys telleth me, that he hath sent you word of Heydon's horse (*q. whores?*) and of other things, more of which I was purposed to asent (*have sent*) you word of.

The holy Trinity have you in keeping. Written at Norwich, the Wednesday next after Saint Mathias.

Yours, MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich,
Wednesday, February,
between 1455 and 1460. 34 and 39 H. VI.

[1] Richard Welles, a son of Lionel Lord Welles, married Joanna, daughter and heir to Robert Lord Willoughby, in whose right he was, in 1455, summoned to parliament as Lord Willoughby of Eresby.

[2] This, I think, must be Henry Lord Cromwell.

[3] Lionel Lord Welles, fell in the battle of Towton, in 1461.

[4] Who the writer William Tailboys was I have not been able to make out, but it is plain by his requesting the attendance of Lord Beaumont's servants, &c. that he meant to repel force by force, and to rescue his servant from a violent death, if he should be so fortunate as to overcome his adversaries.

[5] A commission of oyer and terminer is the largest of the five commissions by which our judges of assize now sit in their several circuits. It was wont in former times to be only in use upon some sudden outrage or insurrection in any place.

LETTER C.—(LXXII. vol. iii. p. 291.)

It appears that Lady Ogard's cousin and counsel assisted her to good purpose, for on the 2nd of August, 1456, we find that Master Thomas Fairclowe, D.D. was presented by her to the church of Attleborough.

To my right worshipful cousin, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful and entirely well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you heartily, letting you weet that there is a controversy moved betwixt my cousin John Radcliff,[1] of Attleborough and me for the advowson of the church of Attleborough, the which is new [*lately*] void, whereof the title is mine verily, as God knoweth, the which shall be opened unto you; and upon Thursday next, at Wymondham, there shall be taken an Enquiry de jure Patronatus, afore Master Robert Popy and Master Simon Thornham,[2] at which day I may nought be myself as God knoweth, and though I might it were not convenient (*q. becoming?*). And, therefore, right trusty cousin, considering that I am a widow impotent as of body, tenderly and heartily I pray you, if it like you to be there assisting my counsel in my right, as reason and law will, upon Thursday next by eight of the clock, and Fincham,[3] Spelman, and other of my counsel shall be then there waiting upon you; and, gentle cousin, have me excused though I write thus briefly and homely to you, for in truth I do it of a singular trust and affection the which I have in you, considering the good name and fame of truth, wisdom, and good conduct, the which I hear of you. And therefore and (*if*) ye may to your weal, I beseech you heartily to be there, and ye shall nought lose thereby, with the grace of Almighty Jesu, the which ever preserve and promote you, gentle cousin, in much worship to your heart's ease. At Bokenham Castle, on Tuesday in Pasche Week, in haste.

Dame ALICE OGARD.[4]

Bokenham, Easter Tuesday,
30 March, 1456. 34 H. VI.

LETTER CI.—(LXXIII. vol. iii. p. 295.)

The feoffment, which Botoner appears so anxious about, most probably concerned those lands which Sir John Fastolf intended to devote to charitable uses, as the founding of his college, &c. From the management of his accounts we see the manner in which the affairs of the great men of the time were conducted, and the method here proposed seems the best that could be contrived for bringing back his auditors to their accustomed exactness.

To my Master Paston.

PLEASE you to weet that, after due recommendation, it is so that my master sendeth me to London for the matter of Rochester as for divers of his own particular matters which concern not the law, &c. And I am like to tarry there till ye come, in case ye come within three weeks.

Sir, at reverence of God, sith (*since*) my master is fully in will to renew his feoffment, (*take care*) that it may be done by time by the surest ground that may be had, for, be it never so surely done, it shall be thought little enough to keep his land out of trouble; and to spare for no counsel nor cost to make it sure, for a penny in season spent will save a pound.

I communed with my brother Spyrling, which sayeth he will do his attendance, and to keep it right close of the names,[5] tarrying draweth peril.

And ye moved a good matter to the parson and to me at your last being at Caister, that my master should be learned (*informed*) what his household standeth upon yearly since he

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[1] John Radcliff, Esq. married Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Walter Lord Fitz Walter; he was in her right called Lord Fitz Walter, and was killed at Ferrybridge in 1460.

[2] These were civilians and officers belonging to the bishop's court.

[3] Simeon Fincham, of Fincham, Esq., his son John married Agnes, daughter of John Spelman, of Beckerton, Esq., I suppose the person here mentioned; he died in 1460, and Simeon in 1458.

[4] Dame Alice Ogard was the widow of Sir Andrew Ogard, Knt., whose first wife was Margaret, the daughter of Sir John Clifton, Knt., of Bokenham Castle. He died in 1454, and Alice, his relict, in 1460.

[5] Of the trustees named in the feoffment, I suppose

kept it wholly together at one place; and that done, then to see by the revenues of his yearly livelihood what may be laid and assigned out for that cause to maintain his said household, and over that, what may be assigned to bear out his pleas;[1] and also to pay for his foreign charges,[2] and deeds of alms to a convenient sum.

And since the greatest ordinary charge must be his household keeping, it were most expedient that ye would note well to remember specially my master to do (*cause*) his auditors cast up and make rolls of his accounts concerning the said household since he came into Norfolk these two years and half, which was never so long to do these forty winters, as ye know; and it is pity that his audit is none otherwise in that intended; ye must needs, if ye will my master know how it stand with him yearly of his charges, that this be done first, as it was always accustomed; my master will accord it to be done, but it is forgotten through negligence of men given to sensuality, as Thomas Upton, me, and others;[3] my master cannot know whether he go backward or forward till this be done.

I can not (*nought*) else, but ye will not forget this, that the auditors go verily about it to an end; and Heylesdon accounts be behind hand for two years too, great pity is; and it were (*I wish it were*) yours, or in any wise man's governance. At Norwich, hastily, the Wednesday in Easter week.

BOTOHRNER.

Norwich, Wednesday in Easter Week,
31 March, 1456. 34 H. VI.

LETTER CII.—(LXXIV. vol. iii. p. 299.)

We have in this letter a continuation of Botoner's advice concerning the management of Sir John Fastolf's affairs at Caister, &c., and proper methods proposed for remedying them. He seems to think that Sir John Fastolf was a considerable loser by concerning himself with ships, and in merchandise, &c., and hints that his corn and wool might be turned to better account than exchanged for wares at Yarmouth. The second part of this letter, which concerns political matters, seems to refer to the year 1456, when the king was again under the management of the queen and her party. The king and his friends were now at Herford (Hereford I suppose it means), inquiring after and punishing those who had joined the Duke of York's army raised in Wales.

To the right worshipful Sir, John Paston, Esquire, being in Norwich, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, after due recommendation, please you to weet that I wrote a remembrance to you the day that I departed out of Norwich, by Richard, the parson's servant of Blofield, concerning certain matters to be remembered by your wisdom for my master's avail, which your great wisdom can well understand is right needful, as one thing in especial, that Shipdam and Spyrling ought to labour, first of anything that belongeth, to audit the accounts of the receipts and dispenses (*disbursements*) of my master's household in Caister since he came last into Norfolk, which as well for the provisions that is had of his own growing as in money paid; for till the said accounts be made ordinately (*methodically*), which be of a great charge yearly, weet ye for certain my master shall never know whether he goeth backward or forward; and many other accomptants, that maken livery (*make delivery*) of provisions of corns and cattle to the household by the receiver and by the bailiffs, cannot approve their liberates [*vouchers*] just, till the said household books be made up; and since it hath been kept ordinarily since my master began to keep house this fifty year almost, and when he hath been absent beyond sea, &c., it ought (*to*) be more readilier done and made up while he is present and well, the rather that his household meny [*retainers*] were not so whole together this forty year as be now at Caister. Also his minustres of accounts (*minutes or first draughts*) of his chief manor of Heylesdon for three years to make up and to examine; and I assure you full simply approved his wools and hiss farm.

[1] His law business.

[2] Charges not connected with his household accounts.

[3] [This is a most singular accusation for Botoner to lay against himself.]

And the third is, that, so would Jesu, my master's auditors would faithfully and plainly inform my master of the truth of the yearly great damage he beareth in disbursing his money about shipping and boats, keeping an house up at Yarmouth to his great harm, and receiveth but chaffer and ware for his corns and wools, &c. And then must abide a long day to make money; of such chaffer taking he shall never be monied, nor be answered clearly of his revenues yearly, but (*unless*) those things above said be amended betimes. In Lewis's days twelve years together my master was wont to lay up money yearly at London and Caister, and now the contrary, de malo in pejus.

I dare not be known of this bill, but ye may question and vele (*feel*) of the disposition of these matters of others, and then understand if I write justly or *no*; and ye, as of your motion, for my master's worship and profit, exhorting him, the steward, Shipdam, and Spyrling to take a labour and a pain that this be reformed.

I pray you and require you keep this matter to yourself. Your BOTONER.

As for novelties none cometh, but it is said the siege shall come to Calais; the Earl of Warwick[1] is yet at Canterbury with the archbishop,[2] and the earl's younger brother[3] is married to Sir Edmund Inglethorpe's daughter upon Saint Mark's day, the Earl of Worcester[4] brought about the marriage; the queen and the king at Herford,[5] the Lords Buckingham,[6] Shrewsbury[7] and others there; and now it is said Herbert[8] shall come in, and appear at Leicester before the king and the lords, his life granted and goods, so he make amends to them he hath offended; many be indicted, some causelessly, which maketh Herbert's party stronger; and the burgesses and gentlemen about Herford will go with the king, wife and child, but (*unless*) a peace be made ere the king part thence; for else Herbert and his affinity will acquit them [*requite them*], as it is said.

The Earl of Warwick hath had the folks of Canterbury and Sandwich before him, and thanked them of their good hearts, and victualling of Calais, and prayeth them of continuance.

I send a bill of the names indicted, to my master and you, to see and laugh at their Welsh names descended of old pedigrees.[9] Our Lord be with you; written hastily at London, the 1st day of May. BOTONER.

London, Saturday, 1st of May,
1456. 34 H. VI.

LETTER CIII.—(XXXI. vol. i. p. 131.)

This letter was written on Whitsun Eve, the 15th of May, in 1456, a short time after a tumult in London, between the inhabitants and some merchants of Lombardy. The court supposed the Duke of York's party to have encouraged it, and, by the report of Lord Beaumont being slain and the Earl of Warwick much hurt, (I suppose in this tumult,) it appears at least that the leaders of each party were drawn into it when it did happen, although no previous plan might be laid by either party for that purpose. But as the report was false of either of these noblemen being killed or wounded, so possibly neither might be present in the tumult.

To my Master Paston.

WORSHIPFUL Sir and my good master, I recommend me to you; this day I came home, and as to our matters, I shall be with you on Monday and Tuesday next by my master's

[1] Richard Nevile Earl of Warwick.

[2] Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Lord Chancellor.

[3] John Nevile, afterwards Marquis Montague, married Isabel, daughter and heir of Sir Edmund Ingoldesthorpe, of Burgh Green in Cambridgeshire, by his wife Jane, sister, and at length co-heir of John Lord Tiptoft, first Earl of Worcester. He was slain in the battle of Barnet in 1471.

[4] John Tiptoft was created Earl of Worcester in 1449, and in Edward IVth's reign elected a Knight of the Garter. During that king's deposition in 1470, the Earl of Warwick obtained in parliament that Worcester should be beheaded.

[5] This must mean Hereford.

[6] Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, killed at the battle of Northampton in 1460.

[7] John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, he was Lord Treasurer, and fell at the battle of Northampton, æt. 49.

[8] Sir William Herbert, knight, had greatly assisted the Duke of York in raising forces, and ever continuing a steady Yorkist, often contended against the Lancastrians. He was afterwards deservedly in favour with Edward IV., and by him was created Earl of Pembroke; he was taken prisoner at the battle of Banbury in 1469, and beheaded by the rebels.

[9] [This list does not appear.]

advice, and inform you of all, and of such as I will not write. Your coffer is at the Prince's inn; send for it when ye like, by the token[1] I had of Margaret Goche, a book of law that Wigge brought me.

As for tidings, my masters your brethren fare well, and recommend them to my mistress their mother, to you and to all, &c. As for tidings else, the king is at Shene, the queen and prince at Tutbury,[2] but, if it be, the latter removing. Tidings were that the Lord Beaumont was slain, and my Lord Warwick sore hurt, 1000 men slain and six score knights and 'squires hurt, and nothing true, blessed be God. As for the Lombards, two of the trespassers were hanged on Monday, and there are by this time proclamations made, or shall be, through London, the peace to be kept upon great pains; and the Lombards to occupy their merchandizes[3] as they did, till the council and parliament have otherwise determined, and no more as yet.

The atteint abideth unruled till the next term, as I shall tell you, and it shall do well with God's grace, who have you in keeping, and all yours. Written at Caister vigilia Pentecosten.

Your own JOHN BOCKING.[4]

Whitsun Even, 15th of May, 1456.
34 H. VI.

LETTER CIV.—(XXXII. vol. i. p. 135.)

[THIS letter is also from Bocking to J. Paston, dated from Horsleydown, June 7, 1456, and contains a number of bits of intelligence, public and private, but of no general interest.]

LETTER CV.—(XXXIII. vol. i. p. 139.)

[THIS is a short letter from Lord Scales to J. Paston, urging him to keep an appointment for "Thursday seven days next coming; which shall be for the best as I trust, notwithstanding I suppose learned men will not be easy for to get, because of this busy time of harvest." It is dated from Middleton, Norfolk, the 10th of August, 1456.]

LETTER CVI.—(XXXIV. vol. i. p. 141.)

[FROM William Botoner to J. Paston, from London, in July, 1457, as is guessed, for the year is not given. It is another letter of scraps of news of law proceedings, and other matters of no general interest. Among other things it tells us:—"Justice is done daily upon thieves and malefactors, and people be glad that justice may proceed," and that "the soldiers be more temperate than they were."]

LETTER CVII.—(XXXV. i. p. 143.)

From these memoranda we may collect that her son, Clement Paston, who was born in 1442, had already been at Cambridge, where he had been negligent of his learning, and where he had been properly corrected. He was now under the tuition of a Mr. Greenfield, in London, to whom his mother herein delegates proper authority to correct him, with a reward in hand and the promise of a greater if he shall be successful. Clement's wardrobe seems well furnished with gowns. Elizabeth Paston, her daughter, was at this time between twenty and thirty years old, and seems to be brought up in the family of Lady Pole, where, though she

[1] This shows the caution used at this time, for preventing impositions on the delivery of goods at inns, &c.

[2] In Staffordshire, our historians say at Coventry.

[3] This seems to point out to us that this riot was occasioned by some matters relative to trade, and not, as some of our historians relate, "to a foreigner's wearing a dagger."

[4] John Bocking was one of the household of Sir John Fastolf, probably he was his counsellor, for men of rank and fortune in those days constantly retained one or more in their service.

paid for her board, she was employed in needle-works of various kinds. This Lady Pole was most probably the daughter, or wife of a son, of Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, the father of William Duke of Suffolk.

Errands to London of Agnes Paston, the 28th day of January, 1457, the year of King Henry VI. the 36th.

To pray Greenfield to send me faithfully word by writing how Clement Paston hath done his endeavour in learning.

And if he hath not done well, nor will not amend, pray him that he will truly belash (*whip*) him till he will amend; and so did the last master, and the best that ever he had at Cambridge.

And say (*tell*) Greenfield, that if he will take upon him to bring him into good rule and learning, that I may verily know he doth his endeavour, I will give him 10 marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) for his labour, for I had lever (*rather*) he were fairly buried than lost for default.

Item, to see how many gowns Clement hath, and they that be bare, let them be raised, (*let them have a new nap*[1] *set upon them.*)

He hath a short green gown. And a short musterdevelers[2] gown, (*which*) were never raised.

And a short blue gown, that was raised, and made of a side gown when I was last at London.

And a side[3] russet gown furred with beaver was made this time two years.

And a side murray gown was made this time twelvemonth.

Item, to do make me (*get made for me*) six spoons of eight ounces of troy weight, well fashioned and double gilt.

And say (*tell*) Elizabeth Paston that she must use herself to work readily, as other gentlewomen do, and somewhat to help herself therewith.

Item, to pay the Lady Pole 26*s.* and 8*d.* for her board.

And if Greenfield have done well his devoir to Clement, or will do his devoir, give him the noble, (6*s.* 8*d.*)

AGNES PASTON.

LETTER CVIII.—(XXXVI. vol. i. p. 147.)

This letter requires some previous explanation from our English history, before it can be properly understood. The Duke of York, in 1456, having not yet openly asserted his right to the crown, the queen's party, though informed of his intentions on that head, could not take such steps as if his designs had been more apparently avowed. The king, however, in the summer of this year sent letters to the duke, and to the Earls of Salisbury and Warwick, requiring them to meet him at Coventry on matters of state. They were suspicious of the queen; however they set forwards, but either on the road or at their arrival their emissaries informed them that they were in danger, whereupon they immediately separated and departed. Foreign affairs, during the greatest part of the year 1457, kept both parties rather quiet, but in January, when domestic disputes were again ready to break out, endeavours were used for a reconciliation, and the king wrote with his own hand letters to the Duke of York and his friends, requesting them to repair to London, in order to have all matters amicably and sincerely adjusted. This letter, from the Earl of Salisbury to Viscount Beaumont, seems to have been written in answer to that received by him from the king, and sent to the Earl by one of his highness's grooms of his chamber. It appears by this answer that the Earl was fearful of putting himself (at least till he had consulted his friends) into the king's and queen's power, and therefore feigns himself very sick; but at the same time he seems conscious that his sickness will not be believed to be so bad as he had represented it, by the particular care he takes to express himself concerning it. Not content with this representation, he likewise refers his lordship to another person to vouch the truth of it, not indeed to Hagerston, the king's messenger, who brought him the letter, but to one Robert Danby: and I think it may be concluded, that had his illness been real, he would have thought that his word and honour as a nobleman would have been a sufficient confirmation of the truth of his assertion. His fears, however, were certainly well grounded, considering the snare he had

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[1] "I tell thee, Jack Cade the clothier means to dress the commonwealth, and turn it and *set a new nap upon it.*"—Henry VI. Part ii. Act iv.

[2] Probably *Mestier de Velours*, French, a half velvet.

[3] A side gown may mean a long one; for in Laneham's account of Queen Elizabeth's entertainment at Kenilworth Castle, 1575, the minstrel's "gown had *side* (i. e. long) sleeves down to the mid-leg." The gown however described by Mrs. Paston, appears rather to have been the Sid-neap. Lateralis vestis, sc. ad latera tegenda. Lumbaris toga. See Reubenij Glossarium, 65. Ælfr. Gloss. p. 68 and 69. A gown to cover the *sides* or loins.

escaped when last summoned; but it may be supposed, that, on a meeting or consultation between him and the Duke of York, it was determined that they would both attend. All our historians agree that they came, though accompanied with armed followers; and the next letter written by William of Worcester, and dated 1st of February, mentions these noblemen as then arrived; so that very soon after sending away this letter the Earl must have altered his plan. In consequence of this attendance a public and specious reconciliation took place, about the latter end of March or the beginning of April; and in a procession to St. Paul's Church, the Earl of Salisbury went hand in hand with the Duke of Somerset, immediately before the king.

The direction of this letter from an avowed Yorkist is very particular, and being written to a nobleman in office about the king's person, and a strict adherent to the House of Lancaster, the friendly address may justly be suspected of wanting sincerity; but both these noblemen being Knights Companions of the most noble Order of the Garter, this brotherly mode of address was usual.

To the right worshipful, and, with all mine heart, right entirely well-beloved brother, the Viscount Beaumont.

RIGHT worshipful, and, with all mine heart, right entirely well-beloved brother, I recommend me unto you; and for so much as, by the king's most noblest letters, brought me late by Hagerston, one of the grooms of his chamber, I am desired to come unto his highness to London.

Whereunto for such grievous disease and infirmities as it hath liked our lord to visit me with, whereof Robert Danby can at large declare unto you, I can ne mowe (*nor may*) dispose me; without feynyng (*feigning*), by the truth I owe unto the king, but that thereby I doubt not I should not recover [*all the*] days of my life such hurt as, by the reason of the said disease, would grow unto me; the which hath right fervently and sore holden me in many diverse behalves, so that sith (*since*) my last coming from London, I had not by the space of six days together my health.

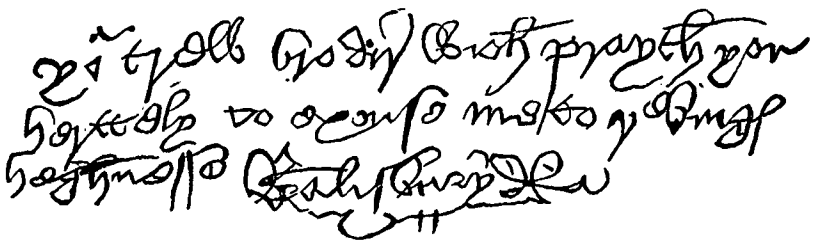
Wherefore, brother, I pray you with all mine whole heart, that it like you to call tofore you the said Robert Danby, and to take of him the very truth in the premises; and thereupon to be my good and tender moyen (*mean*), as by your wisdom can best be thought convenable unto the king's good grace, for the excuse of my none coming; praying you heartily to certify me by comers between, such tidings as ye shall have in those parts, with other your good pleasure to be performed at my power, as knoweth our Lord, to whom I beseech to ever have you in his blessed protection and keeping.

Written at Sheriff Hutton, the 24th day of January.

Your true brother, which prayeth you heartily to excuse me to the king's highness,

R. SALISBURY.[1]

Sheriff Hutton, Tuesday 24th of January, 1457-8. 36 H. VI.



[1] Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury, father of the Earl of Warwick, was a principal promoter of the Duke of York's pretensions; he was a nobleman of great character, and of consummate prudence and abilities; but being taken prisoner at the battle of Wakefield, in December, 1460, he was beheaded.

The conclusion (from the words "Yor trew," &c.) and signature of this letter are written by the Earl himself, the other parts of it by his secretary. We have given above a fac-simile of the concluding part of this letter in the hand-writing of the Earl.

LETTER CIX.—(XXXVII. vol. i. p. 151.)

[This letter is from Botoner (Worcester) to Sir John Fastolf, and narrates some law proceedings of no consequence, and a few political matters, either well known, or of no interest.]

LETTER CX.—(LXXV. vol. iii. p. 305.)

At a time when the kingdom was in a state of constant alarm from the civil contentions between the White and Red Roses, it is not to be wondered at that the coasts were neglected, and that the enemies of England took advantage of this neglect by pillaging the inhabitants near the shores. These coasts were likewise exposed to the enemy in 1449, see Letter xxiii. p. 16.

To John Paston, dwelling in the Inner Inn of the Temple, at London, be this letter delivered in haste.

Son, I greet you, and send you God's blessing and mine; as for my daughter your wife, she fareth well, blessed be God! as a woman in her plight may do, and all your sons and daughters.

And forasmuch as ye will send me no tidings, I send you such as be in this country; Richard Lynsted came this day from Paston[1] and let me weet, that on Saturday last past, Dravell, half-brother to Warren Harman, was taken with enemies, walking by the sea-side, and (*they*) have him forth with them; and they took two pilgrims,[2] a man and a woman, and they robbed the woman and let her go, and led the man to the sea; and when they knew he was a pilgrim, they gave him money, and set him again on the land; and they have this week taken four vessels off Winterton, and Happesburgh and Eccles.

Men be sore afraid for taking of me, for there be ten great vessels of the enemy's; God give grace that the sea may be better kept than it is now, or else it shall be a perilous dwelling by the sea-coast.

I pray you greet well your brethren, and say (*tell*) them that I send them God's blessing and mine, and say William that if Janet Lauton be not paid for the crimson coat which Alson [*Alison* or *Alice*] Crane[3] wrote to her for in her own name, that then he pay her, and see Alson Crane's name stricken out of her book, for she saith she will ask no man the money but Alson Crane. And I pray you that ye will remember the letter that I sent you last, and God be with you.

Written at Norwich, the Wednesday next before St. Gregory (*12th March*).

By your mother, Agnes Paston.

Norwich, Wednesday, 8th March,
1457-8. 36 H. VI.

LETTER CXI.—(XXXVIII. vol. i. p. 155.)

This letter gives us an account of those noblemen who came to London in consequence of the king's letters, requesting their attendance, in order to establish a reconcilintion between both parties. It appears that each party had a separate council, the lords who were friends to the king, being lodged without the city, meeting at the White Friars; and those in the Duke of York's interest, being lodged within the city, at the Black Friars. The reason given is—their mutual convenience; the real one, perhaps—political; though as the meetings were held at different times of the day, the lords of each party might be present. Holinshed says, that the king's friends met in the Chapter House in Westminster.

To my Master Fastolf, at Caister, in haste.

Like it your mastership to weet, that as for tidings, the council is, the forenoon, at the Black Friars, for the ease of resorting of the lords that are within the town; and, at after-

[1] Paston is situated exactly on the north-east point of the Norfolk coast.

[2] We have here an instance of the respect paid to pilgrims; for we find as soon as the man carried aboard the ships was known by the commander to be on pilgrimage, he was dismissed, and set on shore with money in his pocket, which probably might be given to him as a recompense for what the sailors had taken from the woman on shore, or to defray the expenses of his pilgrimage.

[3] This was probably a daughter of Robert Crane, of Stonham, in Suffolk.

noon, at the White Friars in Fleet-street, for the lords without the town; and all things shall come to a good conclusion with God's grace; for the king shall come hither this week, and the queen also, as some men say, and my Lords Buckingham,[1] and Stafford[2] with her, and much people.

My Lord of Canterbury[3] taketh great pain upon him daily, and will write unto you the certainty of such tidings as fall; and should have done ere this time, save for that he would know an end of the matter.

Other tidings here are none, save my Lord of Exeter is displeased that the Earl of Warwick shall keep the sea, and hath therefore received this week 1000*l.* of the Hanaper.[4]

The messenger was on horseback when I wrote you this bill, and therefore it was done in haste, and our Lord Jesu keep you. Written at London the Wednesday after Midlent.[5]

And my Lord of Canterbury told me that the Frenchmen[6] have been before you, and that ye shot many guns, and so he told all the lords. I have desired him to move the council for refreshing of the town of Yarmouth with stuff of ordnance, and guns and gunpowder, and he said he would.

Your humble servant,
JOHN BOCKING.

London, Wednesday, 15th of March,
1457-8. 36 H. VI.

LETTER CXII.—(LXXVI. vol. iii. p. 309.)

I have given this long letter to show the means used to tamper with sheriffs and under-sheriffs, that juries might be returned favourable to the cause of those who had influenced the returning officer; this conversation is a very curious one, and exhibits care, caution, and finesse on both sides. We are happy in living in times when neither the crown improperly interferes in matters of trial by jury, nor are any of our sheriffs in this age ever accused of packing a jury to oblige particular parties. The stream of justice runs pure and clear—may it ever continue so! This letter was most probably written between the years 1457 and 1460 (see Letters cxiv. and cxv.), as Lord Molyns was a Lancastrian, and beheaded early in the reign of Edward IV., when, from the letters here referred to, it appears there were matters of property in dispute between this nobleman and J. Paston. The sheriffs for the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk for the following years were, for 1457 Richard Bothe, for 1458 Giles de Saintloe, 1459 William de Calthorpe, and 1460 Philip Wentworth; it was with one of these, therefore, that this conversation passed. The manner in which our nobles travelled in this age is here pointed out. [Sir John Fenn, we think, is too apt to confound attempts with deeds in order to depreciate our ancestors unduly. In this case we have an agent of Paston's writing an account to his employer of his interview with the sheriff, apparently an intimate friend of Paston's. The agent's guesses are worth nothing; and what are the facts? The sheriff refuses a present for something he had done, and only consents at last that it shall be left till he and Paston meet; he declares "he took never no money of none of them all;" and "he trustyth to Godde to inpanell seche men as shuln to hise knowleche be indeferent, and non comon juro's." And what does the tampering appear to amount to? The want of the date of the year to so many of the letters makes it difficult to be precise in the chronological arrangement, but there is no reason to donbt that this and the following letter, and those alluded to of Lord Molyns, all refer to the same matter—namely, a case of disputed right of possession, in which even at the present day it is not uncustomary to have resort to force, though not quite of so rough a character as was in use in an age when men were compelled by law and necessity to be exercised in arms. We have therefore in this instance brought the letters together which Fenn had separated. The favour asked appears to refer to proceedings against Lord Molyns' party for a riot, to which the sheriff replies, it is the king's matter, and not Paston's, but he shall have a fair jury; the bribe seems to have been a bond of indemnity (a custom yet in disputed cases), which he declines, as it cannot be made large enough to make him entirely safe. There is thus very slight evidence of an attempt to bribe, and we think strong proof of its rejection if offered, and a determination to let the law take its fair course between

[1] Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, was slain in the battle of Northampton in 1460.

[2] Henry Stafford, Earl of Stafford, grandson to the Duke of Buckingham, succeeded him in 1460; and was the principal instrument in raising Richard III. to the throne; but afterwards plotting against him, he was obliged to retire from court, and conceal himself; when being treacherously betrayed, he was taken and beheaded without any form of trial in 1483.

[3] [Thomas Bourchier. See Letter xciv.]

[4] The Hanaper was the office where the king's treasures were kept, and was at this time, I believe, another name for the Exchequer.

[5] The first Sunday in Lent happened in the year 1457-8 on the 19th of February, and Midlent Sunday on the 12th of March.

[6] During the year 1457, the French made several attempts upon our coast, but without much effect.

both. The custom of parties addressing the acting officer or the judges was bad, no doubt, but it does not of itself make out corruption. We consider this period much more free from such a reproach than the later one, extending from the time of James I. till some years after the accession of the House of Hanover.]

To my right reverend and worshipful master, John Paston, be this delivered.

PLEASE it your mastership to weet, that I have spoken with the sheriff at his place, moving to him, as for that that was left with his under-sheriff, it is your will he should send a man of his for it; for though it were more, ye would gladly he should take it; he thanked you, and said his under-sheriff was at London, and himself had none deserved, and if he had he would have taken it. And when I departed from him I desired him again to send therefore, and then he said it should abide till ye came home, whereby I conceive he would have it, and be glad to take it. Moreover I remembered him of his promises made before to you at London, when he took his oath and charge, and that ye were with him when he took his oath, and other divers times; and for the promises made by him to you at that time, and other times at the oyer determiner at Lynn, ye proposed you by the trust that ye have in him for to attempt and rear actions that should be to the avail of him and of his office;[1] he would have known what the actions should be; I said I could not tell him, and then he said he would do for you that he may, except for the acquittal of the Lord Molyns' men, insomuch as the king hath written to him for to show favour to the Lord Molyns and his men, and as he saith the indictment longeth (*belongeth*) to the king and not to you, and the Lord Molyns (*is*) a great lord.[2] Also, as he saith, now late the Lord Molyns hath sent him a letter, and my Lord of Norfolk another, for to show favour in these indictments, he dare not abide the jeopardy of that that he should offend the king's commandment, he know not how the king may be informed of him, and what shall be said to him.

And then I said, as for any jeopardy that he should abide in anything that he doth for you, or by your desire, ye have offered him, and will perform it, sufficient surety for to save him harmless, and therefore I supposed there would none reasonable man think but that he might do for you without any jeopardy;[3] and then he said he might none surety take that passed an hundred pounds; and the Lord Molyns is a great lord, he might soon cause him to lose that and much more; then I said, by that mean in default of a sheriff every man may be put from his livelihood; and then he said, if it were for the livelihood men would take them the nearer for to abide a jeopardy, but by his faith, as he swore, if the king wrote again to him he will no longer abide the jeopardy of the king's writing, but he trusteth to God to impannel such men as should to his knowledge be indifferent, and none common jurors.

As me seemeth it would do good and ye would get a commandment of the king to the sheriff for to show you favour, and to impannel gentlemen, and not for to favour none such riots, &c.; for he said that he sent you the letter that the king sent him, and ye said a man should get such (*an*) one for a noble (6*s.* 8*d.*).[4]

Item, I remembered him of the promises that he made to Tymperley, and that if he would make you very true promise ye would reward him as much as he would desire, or any other reasonable man for him, and as much or more than any adversary ye have would give him; then he said he took never no money of none of them all; there was proffered him at Walsingham for the Lord Molyns twenty nobles (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*), he had not a penny; moreover I proffered

[1] [These were actions proposed to be raised by the sheriff against Lord Molyns' men, as common rioters.]

[2] [This does not imply improper interference, but that Lord Molyns had told his story, which was of course favourable to himself, and such as to cause the king to write to the sheriff not to allow of indictments in what was properly a civil suit.]

[3] [This shows that the jeopardy of offending the king's commandment was merely legal and pecuniary.]

[4] [Another proof of the little importance of the king's interference, and of the one-sidedness of Paston's wishes, "non seche riotts" were to be favoured in Lord Molyns; though the following letter from Agnes Paston evinces no disinclination to resort to the same means.]

him, if he would make you promise that ye might verily trust upon him, ye would give him in hand as he would desire, or to leave a sum if he would have named it in a mean (*middle*) man's hand, and such as he hath trust to; and then he said, if he might do for you, or if he do anything for you, then he will take your money with a good will; and other promise I could not have of him, but that he would do for you all that he may, except for the indictments; I conceive verily he hath made promise to do his part that they shall be acquitted, but I suppose he hath made none other promise against you for the livelihood, but he looketh after a great bribe, but it is not for to trust him verily without that he may not choose [*that he cannot help.*][1]

I suppose he had no writing from my Lord of Norfolk as he said.

I was at Framlingham for to have spoken with Tymperley, Debenham, or Berry, and they were all out; my lord as he came from London he was at Ipswich on Monday, and when he (*came*) without the town towards Framlingham, he had all his men ride forth afore a great pace, for he would follow softly, and when his men were out of sight, he rode with five men to an esquire's place of his thereby, and on Tuesday rode my lady to him, and so I did nought at Framlingham. No more at this time, but Almighty Jesu speed you, and have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, the Thursday next after Saint Austin, &c. (*28th August.*)

By your servant,
JOHN OSBERN.

Norwich, August, between 1457 and 1460.
35 and 39 H. VI.

LETTER CXIII.—(LXXVII. vol. iii. p. 315.)

The direction of this curious letter is obliterated, but it is plainly from Margaret Paston to her husband; and the paper is likewise so completely filled with writing that she has not even either subscribed or dated it; but by the mentioning of Sir John Fastolf, it must have been written before 1459. We have here a particular account of the offensive weapons used in the castles, and even in the common houses of the inferior people, who seemed to have lived in a continued state of warfare with their neighbours, and to be prepared to oppose force by force. We can from this account likewise form a judgment for what purposes the embrasures now remaining in ancient buildings were intended; and from their heights and dimensions determine whether they were to shoot through with arrows, or to fire through with guns.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, and pray you to get some cross-bows and wyndacs,[2] (*windlasses*) to bind them with and quarrels,[3] for your houses here be so low that there may none man shoot out with no long bow, though we had never so much need.

I suppose ye should have such things of Sir John Fastolf if ye would send to him; and also I would ye should get two or three short pole-axes to keep with [*in*] doors, and as many jackets and (*if*) ye may.

Partrich and his fellowship are sore afraid that ye would enter again upon them, and they have made great ordinance within the house, and it is told me they have made bars to bar the doors crosswise, and they have made wickets on every quarter of the house to shoot out at, both with bows and with hand-guns: and the holes that be made from hand-guns they be scarce knee high from the plancher (*floor*), and of such holes be made five, there can none man shoot out at them with no hand-bows.

Purry fell in fellowship with William Hasard at Quarles's, and told him that he would come and drink with Partrich and with him, and he said he should be welcome, and after noon he went thither for to espy what they dedyn (*had done*), and what fellowship they had with them; and when he came thither the doors were fast sperred [*bolted*][4] and there were none folks with them but Maryoth, and Capron and his wife, and Quarles's wife, and another man in a black[5]

[1] [This is merely an opinion, and proves nothing.]
[2] Windacs are what we now call grappling-irons, with which the bow-string is drawn home.
[3] An arrow with a square head.
[4] [Orig. "sperid." Feen translates "speared," and explains "shut."]
[5] [*A black*—mourning. Black is used by Massinger and other dramatic poets in this sense frequently.]

yed (*went*) somewhat halting, I suppose by his words that it was Norfolk of Gimmingham; and the said Purry espied all these foresaid things.

And Maryoth and his fellowship had much great language that shall be told you when ye come home.

I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to do buy for me one lb. of almonds and one lb. of sugar, and that ye will do buy some frieze to make of your children's gowns, ye shall have best cheap and best choice of Hays's wife as it is told me. And that ye will buy a yard of broad cloth of black for one hood for me of 44*d.* or four shillings a-yard, for there is neither good cloth nor good frieze in this town.' As for the children's gowns and (*if*) I have them, I will do them maken (*have them made.*)

The Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters.

MARGARET PASTON.

No date, but before 1459. 37 H. VI.

LETTER CXIV.—(XLIX. vol. i. p. 193.)

To my trusty and well beloved, the vicary and tenants of my Lordship of Gresham.

TRUSTY and well-beloved friends, I greet you well, and put you all out of doubt for all that ye have done for me; and the money that ye pay to my well-beloved servant John Partrich I will be your warrant as for your discharge, and save you harmless against all those that would grieve you to my power.

And as heartily as I can, I thank you of the good will ye have had and have towards me; and as to the title of right that I have to the lordship of Gresham (*it*) shall within short time be known, and by the law so determined that ye shall all be glad that hath ought me your good will therein.

And Almighty God keep you, and by his grace I shall be with you soon after the parliament is ended.

Written at London, on Our Lady's even last past.

ROBERT HUNGERFORD, LORD MOLYNS.

21st of March, before 1460. 39 H. VI.

LETTER CXV.—(XLVIII. vol. i. p. 191.)

Robert Hungerford, Lord Molyns, attached himself to the House of Lancaster, and was beheaded in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV., and though this letter has no date, I should suppose it might be written between 1457 and 1460, when the Bishop of Winchester was Lord Chancellor, especially as Lord Molyns pays so much attention to the bishop's recommendation. [This and the preceding letter have been transposed from the order in which they are placed by Fenn, in order, as they have no certain dates, but treat of the same affair as the foregoing letters, to bring the whole together. They also confirm what we have already stated as to the course of justice, as we see in the present letter that Paston applies to the Bishop of Winchester, then Lord Chancellor, for a private settlement of grievances betwixt himself and Lord Molyns, to which the latter consents.]

To the worshipful Father in God, and my right good Lord, the Bishop of Winchester.[1]

WORSHIPFUL father in God, and my right good lord, as heartily as I can I recommend me to your good lordship, to the which please it to weet that I have received your letter; by the which I understand the daily suit to your lordship as of Paston, as for the matter betwixt him and me, wherein also I feel that he is willed that communication and treaty should be had betwixt his counsel and mine now at Midsummer; to the which, my lord, I am at the reverence of your lordship well agreed, and have sent to my counsel at London, after the seeing of this your last letter, as for the treaty betwixt him and me, and that they should give full attendance to the end of the matter between the said Paston and me as though I were present with them.

And, my lord, it were too great a thing, and it lay in my power, but I would do at the reverence of your lordship, unless that it

[1] William de Waynfleet or Patten, Provost of Eton, was appointed Bishop of Winchester in 1447, and continued bishop of that see till 1486, having just lived to see the line of Lancaster reascend the throne, to which he had always been a faithful subject.

should hurt me too greatly; which I wote (*know*) well your lordship would never desire.

And God for his mercy have you, right worshipful father in God, and my right good lord, in his blessed keeping.

Written with mine own chancery hand in haste, the 13th day of June, at Teffont.

Very heartily, your MOLYNS.

Teffont, in Wiltshire, 13th of June, between 1457 and 1460. 35 and 39 H. VI.

LETTER CXVI.—(XXXIX. vol. i. p. 157.)

The beginning of this letter, after the usual commendations, refers to a marriage that seemed in agitation for the writer; the other part gives a most particular and curious account of a sea-engagement, in which the writer was present and bore a part, between the Earl of Warwick and the Spaniards; about which our historians are much divided, as to what nation the ships taken belonged, &c. From this authentic narrative it appears that the Earl took six of the trading ships of Spain, and then was obliged to retreat, and secure them and himself in Calais; the immediate exchange of prisoners is a curious piece of intelligence. This battle was fought on Monday the 29th of May, 1458, 36 H. VI. Holinshed says this sea-engagement was fought about Midsummer 1459, &c. A Commission of Inquiry concerning this engagement was granted in July, 1458.

Unto my right worshipful cousin, Margaret Paston, this letter be delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful, and my most best-beloved mistress and cousin, I recommend me unto you as lowly as I may, evermore desiring to hear of your good welfare; the which I beseech Almighty Jesu to preserve you, and keep you to his pleasure, and to your gracious heart's desire.

And if it please you to hear of my welfare, I was in good bele (*health*) at the making of this letter, blessed be God; praying you, that it please you for to send me word, if my father were at Norwich with you at this Trinity mass or no, and how the matter doth between my mistress Blanch Witchingham and me; and if ye suppose that it shall be brought about or no, and how ye feel my father, if he be well willing thereto or no; praying you lowly that I may be recommended lowly unto my mistress, Arblaster's wife, and unto my mistress Blanch her daughter specially.

Right worshipful cousin, if it please you for to hear of such tidings as we have here, the basset (*embassy*) of Burgundy shall come to Calais the Saturday after Corpus Christi day, as men say five hundred horse of them.

Moreover, on Trinity Sunday in the morning, came tidings unto my Lord of Warwick, that there were 28 sail of Spaniards[1] on the sea, and whereof there was sixteen great ships of forecastle; and then my lord went, and manned five ships of forecastle[2] and three carvells[3] and four spynnes;[4] and on the Monday, in the morning after Trinity Sunday, we met together afore Calais at four at the clock in the morning, and fought together till ten at the clock; and there we took six of their ships, and they slew of our men about fourscore, and hurt a 200 of us right sore; and there were slain on their part about 120, and hurt a 500 of them.

And happed me, at the first aboarding of us, we took a ship of 300 ton, and I was left therein, and twenty-three men with me; and they fought so sore that our men were fain to leave them, *and go the*[5] and then come they and aboarded the ship that I was in, and there I was taken, and was prisoner with them six hours, and was delivered again for their men that were taken before; and, as men say, there was not so great a battle upon the sea this forty winters: and forsooth we were well and truly beat, and my lord hath sent for more ships, and like to fight together again in haste.

No more I write unto you at this time, but

[1] [Fenn in mistake has here printed ships.]

[2] Ships of forecastle were ships with forestages, and carried about one hundred and fifty men each; they were the largest ships then in use. A barge carried about eighty men, and a balynger about forty.

[3] Carvels were ships of a middle size.

[4] Spinnes, or pinnaces, carried about twenty-five men each.

[5] These words are struck across in the original letter.

that it please you for to recommend me unto my right reverend and worshipful cousin your husband, and mine uncle Gournay, and to mine aunt his wife, and to all good masters and friends where it shall please you; and after the writing I have from you I shall be at you in all haste.

Written on Corpus Christi day[1] in great haste.

By your own humble servant and cousin,

JOHN JERNYNGAN.[2]

Calais, Corpus Christi day,
Thursday, 1st June,
1458, 36 H. VI.

LETTER CXVII.—(XL. vol. i. p. 163.)

I have given this letter as containing several promotions to offices in the state, but I cannot ascertain the date. It must have been, I think, in the latter part of the reign of Henry VI. Sir Thomas Stanley died in 1458 or 1459. He was succeeded by his son Sir Thomas, who, in 1461, was created Lord Stanley.

To my Master Paston.

I RECOMMEND me unto your good mastership, and as for tidings, Arblaster came home to my lord on Monday at supper-time; and my master Daniel is steward of the Duchy of Lancaster beyond Trent, and Arblaster saith, he hath made me his under-steward.

And as for the chamberlainship of England, the Lord Beaumont hath it, and the Lord Rivers (*is*) constable of England.

As for the Duchy on this side Trent, Sir Thomas Todenham had a joint patent with the Duke of Suffolk, which, if it be resumed, Sir Thomas Stanley hath a bill ready endorsed thereof.

My lord will not to Leicester. My master Daniel desireth you thither. I shall ride thitherward on Friday by times.

Written in haste at Winch, the 13th day of May.

I pray you to think upon my matter to my mistress your wife for my mistress Anne, for in good faith I have fully conquered my lady since ye went, so that I have her promise to be my good lady; and that she shall help me by the faith of her body.

Your servant, DENYES.

Winch, 13th of May,
145—, H. VI.

LETTER CXVIII.—(LXXVIII. vol. iii. p. 319.)

This letter appears to be written between jest and earnest, he laments the smallness of his standing wages, and seems to hint that his master, Sir John Fastolf, would be willing to provide for him if he could do it at the expense of another. The date is uncertain and immaterial, though it must be before 1459. 38 H. VI.

To my Master Paston, H. R.

AFTER due recommendation with my simple service preceding, please your mastership to weet, that as to such remembrance that ye desire me to continue forth, to the uttermost I shall, with good will, so as my master will license me, as oft as I can, the officer to have leisure to be with me, for ye know well I cannot do it alone, &c.

And whereas ye of your pleasure write me or call me Master Worcester, I pray and require you forget that name of mastership, for I am not amended by my master of a farthing in certainty, but of wages of household in common entant comme nous plaira;[3] by Worcester or Botoner I have five shillings yearly, all costs borne, to help to pay for

[1] Is always on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday which fell this year on the 28th of May.

[2] The family of Jernegan, or Jerningham, has been a family of distinction, in Norfolk and Suffolk, ever since the Conquest, and at present flourishes at Cossey in Norfolk. [Now Lords Stafford, 1840.] John Jernegan appears to have had a command in this engagement: he was the son of John Jernegan, who died 1474.

[3] [The original is "but of wags of housold in comune (entaunt come nows plaira);" we should prefer, instead of Fenn's reading, "but of wages of household in common as much (*autant*) as we please;" that is, he had little or no salary, but plenty to eat and drink; was treated like a monial, and not as a gentleman and scholar as he was.]

bonnets that I lose; I told so my master this week, and he said [*told*] me yesterday, he wished me to have been a priest so I had been disposed, to have given me a living by reason (*means*) of a benefice, that another man must give it, as the bishop, but (*if*) he would; and so I indure inter egenos ut servus ad aratrum.

Forgive me, I write to make you laugh; and our Lord bring my master into a better mood for others as (*well as*) for me. At Caister, the 2nd day of September.

I pray you displeasure not your servant be so long, for my master letted him.

Your

W. WORCESTER.

Caister, 2d of September,
before 1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXIX.—(LXXIX. lv. iii. p. 3o21.)

We see that in the age here mentioned, venison was a present worthy acceptance from a nobleman to a great commoner, and a Knight of the Garter. It might have been supposed, from the large possessions of Sir John Fastolf in Norfolk and Suffolk, that a park had been a part of them, but from the circumstance here mentioned it certainly was not. [This deduction does not appear quite certain, though it may have been so.] John de Vere, the Earl of Oxford, from whom this present of venison came, married Elizabeth, the daughter and heir of Sir John Howard, Knight, of Wigenhall St. German's, in Norfolk: by her he became possessed of a considerable property in that county. "Master" appears from this letter to be a title of distinction which William Worcester wishes to dispense with, as it does not contribute to affording him larger wages from his master, Sir J. Fastolf.—That seems to be the meaning of what occurs in this letter [and in the preceding].

To my master, John Paston, Esq., be this delivered.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, and my master heartily thanketh you for the venison that ye sent him from my Lord of Oxford, and prayeth you that he may be recommended to his noble lordship. And God thank you for your special remembrance of my matter that ye have it so tenderly to heart, for ye may know well the good speed of that is my welfare, and the contrary is my utter undoing.

I have sent to John Porter to weet verily how it standeth with him, as ye shall weet the certainty this week; as for the matter written to John Bocking he hath rad (*read*) his letter, and will remember your desire, and also of William Jenney's coming, in case he know of it rather than ye.

And my master heard the substance of your letter read, and liked it right well; and as for the matter of Worcester's remembrance, he shall give his attendance thereto in that he can.

And where ye call him master, he is displeased with that name, for he may spend 5*s.* yearly more by the name of Worcester or Botoner, and by his master not a farthing in certainty, he prayeth you (*to*) forget it.

I pray God keep you. Written at Caister, hastily, the 2nd day of September.

Your own

T. HOWES.

Item, in case Jankyn be whole [*well*] my Lord of Norfolk hath granted (*him*) by mean of Robert Wingfield to be in my said lord's household, as my master hath it by letter from Wingfield.

Caister, 2d of September,
before 1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXX.—(XLI. vol. i. p. 165.)

We here see the anxiety of an old man, wishing, according to the superstition of the time, to be permitted to found a college to the health of his soul, and his future happiness. [The impediments of which he complains arose from the very judicious law, called the Statute of Mortmain, to prevent lands from becoming inalienable in corporations, and which, under certain modifications, still exists. Sir John's intentions were not effected.]

To the worshipful, and my right well-beloved cousin, John Paston, at the Temple, or to William Barker, at Southwark, be this delivered.

WORSHIPFUL cousin, I commend me to you, and whereas I late wrote unto you, in a letter by Henry Hansson, for the foundation of my college; I am sore set thereupon; and that is

the cause I write now, to remember you again to move my Lords of Canterbury [1] and Winchester [2] for the licence to be obtained, that I might have the amortizing without any great fine; in recompense of my long service continued and done unto the king and to his noble father, whom God assoil, and never yet guerdoned (*recompensed*) or rewarded.

And now since I have ordained to make the king founder, and ever to be prayed for; and for his right noble progenitors, his father and uncles, methinketh I should not be denied of my desire, but the rather to be remembered and sped.

Wherefore, as I wrote unto you, I pray you acquaint me and you, for the rather speed hereof,[3] with a chaplain of my Lord of Canterbury, that in your absence may remember me, and in likewise with my Lord Chancellor; for seeing the king's disposition, and also his, unto the edifying of God's service, it might in no better time be moved, &c.

My Lord of Norfolk is removed from Framlingham on foot to go to Walsingham, and daily I wait that he would come hither.

Your cousin, JOHN FASTOLF.

Caister, 18th of November,
before 1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXI.—(XLII. vol. i. p. 167.)

[This letter curiously illustrates the preceding.] It is a generally received opinion that the priests were the most exorbitant in their demands on every occasion; but here it seems otherwise, for the king (*or his ministers*) required 500 marks for a licence for every 100 marks [annual rent?] that were intended to be settled in mortmain. It appears, however, by this letter, that contracts might be made with the abbots, &c. on much more moderate terms, for the performance of masses, &c., and equally secure, even without the king's licence. We are here informed that a demand had been made upon the executors of Lady Abergavenny of nearly as much money, *for a licence to found*, as it actually took to found a service for her.

To my right worshipful uncle, and my right good master, Sir John Fastolf, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful uncle, and my right good master, I recommend me to you with all my service.

And, Sir, my brother Paston and I have communed together as touching to your college [4] that ye would have made, and, Sir, it is too great a good (*sum*) that is asked of you for your licence; for they ask for every 100 marks that ye would amortise (*settle by the statute of mortmain*) 500 marks, and will give it no better cheap (*grant no better bargain.*)

And, Sir, I told my brother Paston, that my Lady Abergavenny [5] hath in diverse abbeys in Leicestershire seven or eight priests singing for her perpetually, by my brother Darcy's and my uncle Brokesby's means, for they were her executors; and they accorded (*agreed*) for money, and gave a 200 or 300 marks, as they might accord (*agree*), for a priest.

And for the surety [6] that he should sing in the same abbey for ever, they had manors of good value bounden to such persons as pleased the said brethren, Brokesby, and my brother Darcy, that the said service should be kept.

And for little more than the king asked them for a licence, they went through with the said abbots.

And I hold this way as sure as that other; ye may commune with your counsel thereof.

And if there be any service that I may do for you, it shall be ready at all times with the grace of God, who have you in his keeping.

Written at London, the 17th day of July.

Your nephew and servant,

HENRY FYLUNGLEY.[7]

London, 17th of July,
before 1459. 38 H. VI.

[1] Thomas Bourchier.

[2] William de Wainfleet.

[3] [*i. e.* make acquaintance, for you and me, for the greater speed hereof, with a chaplain, &c.]

[4] This is the college which Sir John Fastolf intended to have founded at Caister, by Yarmouth, in Norfolk.

[5] Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Worcester, (son and heir of William Beauchamp, Lord Bergavenny,) and wife of Sir Edward Nevile, a younger son of Ralph, first Earl of Westmorland, who by this marriage was summoned as Lord Bergavenny in 1450.

[6] This is a curious fact, as it shows us how security was given by the abbeys, &c. to the parties contracting for a mass or service, that it should be continued for ever in the same abbey, &c.

[7] He appears from other letters to have been a lawyer, and was connected with the Pastons, &c. by marriage. This letter was written during the latter part of the life of Sir John Fastolf, perhaps not long before his death, which happened in 1459.

LETTER CXXII.—(XLIII. vol. i. p. 171.)

This letter is chiefly curious for the account which it gives us of William Worcester's attention to learning and fondness for poetry and books. We find, too, that the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Bourchier, pursued the diversion of hunting, &c.

To my full special good master, John Paston.

WORSHIPFUL Sir, and my full special good master, after humble recommendation, please it you to understand, that such service as I can do to your pleasure, as to mine understanding, I have showed my diligence now this short season since your departing, and in special about such a copy of a foundation,[1] as your mastership commanded me to get you a copy of; of the which I send unto you at this time, by my brother William Worcester, three copies written by Luket, because I had no leisure, but so much business in setting forth of my Master of the Rolls; at this time, and in all this king's days, ye can have none other according [*agreeing*] anything to your intent.

And as for the names of the Poles, William hath more writing than ye and I could find, found by labour made by him and me.

And also, Sir, he hath caused me to examine old and many records written by some Frenchman concerning the manor of Dedham, that was a cumbrous labour, for these copies were full defective, as it appeareth by the correcting of them.

Item, Sir, I may say to you, that William hath gone to school, to a Lumbard called Karoll Giles, to learn and to be read in poetry, or else in French, for he hath been with the same Karoll every day two times or three; and hath bought divers books of him, for the which as I suppose he hath put himself in danger (*debt*) to the same Karoll.

I made a motion to William to have known part of his business, and he answered and said that he would be as glad and as feyn[2] of a good book of French, or of poetry, as my master Fastolf would be to purchase a fair manor; and thereby I understand he list not to be communed withal in such matters.

Item, Sir, as for any tidings, William can tell you here at London are but full few, but Henry Bourchier is dead suddenly at Ludlow; my Lord of Canterbury and my Lord Bourchier[3] shall be this week at Hunsdon, and hunt and sport them with Sir William Oldhall.

At this time, nothing else to your mastership, but and it please you to remember my master[4] at your best leisure, whether his old promise shall stand, as touching my preferring to the Boar's Head in Southwark; Sir, I would have been at another place, and of my master's own motion he said that I should set up in the Boar's Head, in the which matter I report me to William Worcester, Bocking and William Barker, and most specially to my master's own remembrance; I know full well there can no conclusion be taken to mine avail without help of your mastership, unto the which I utterly submit me in this and in all other; and our Lord Jesu preserve you and all yours, and send you your heart's desire with right.

Written at London on Sunday next after Saint Bartholomew's day in haste.

By your servant,

HENRY WYNDESORE.

London, Sunday, before 1459. August, 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXIII.—(LXXX. vol. iii. p. 325.)

In this letter we have an account of reparations and alterations making in their house, with a description of their bed-chamber, and its furniture.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring to hear of your welfare; praying you to weet that Sir Thomas Howes hath purveyed four dormants (*beams*)[5] for the

[1] For Sir J. Fastolf's college at Caister.
[2] [Fain—desirous.]
[3] In 1461 he was created Earl of Essex.
[4] [He was one of Sir J. Fastolf's household.]
[5] [Probably the beams now technically called *sleepers*.]

drawte[1] chamber, and the malthouse, and the brewery, whereof he hath bought three, and the fourth, that shall be the longest and greatest of all, he shall have from Heylesdon, which he saith my master Fastolf shall give me, because my chamber shall be made therewith. As for the laying of the said dormants, they shall be laid this next week because of the malthouse, and as for the remanent I trow it shall abide till ye come home, because I can neither be purveyed of posts nor of boards not yet.

I have taken the measure in the drawte chamber, there as ye would your coffers and your countewery[2] should be set for the while, and there is no space beside the bed, though the bed were removed to the door, for to set both your board and your coffers there, and to have space to go and sit beside; wherefore I have purveyed that ye shall have the same drawte chamber that ye had before, thereas ye shall lye to yourself; and when your gear is removed out of your little house, the door shall be locked, and your bags laid in one of the great coffers, so that they shall be safe, I trust.

Richard Charles and John Dow have fetched home the child[3] from Rockland Tofts, and it is a pretty boy; and it is told me that Will is at Blickling with a poor man of the town: a young woman that was some time with Burton of this town sent me word thereof; I pray you send me word if ye will that anything that ye will be done to him ere ye come home. Richard Charles sendeth you word that Willes hath been at him here, and offered him to make him estate in all things according to their indenture, and if he do the contrary ye shall soon have word.

My mother prayeth you for to remember my sister, and to do your part faithfully ere ye come home to help to get her a good marriage;[4] it seemeth by my mother's language that she would never so fain to have be delivered of her as she will now.

It was told here that Knivet, the heir, is for to marry; both his wife and child be dead, as it was told here; wherefore she would that ye should inquire whether it be so or no, and what his livelihood is, and if ye think that it be for to do, to let him be spoken with thereof.

I pray you that ye be not strange of writing of letters to me betwixt this and that ye come home, if I might I would have every day one from you. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich on the Tuesday next after the conversion (*of*) Saint Paul. (25 *January*.)

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Tuesday,
January, sometime before
1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXIV.—(LXXXI. vol. iii. p. 329.)

The dutiful address of Elizabeth Poynings, daughter of Sir William and Agnes Paston, to her mother, and the handsome manner in which she speaks of her husband, would do honour to a modern daughter and wife; and the anxiety she shows that her husband might be able to discharge his sureties is both pleasing and commendable. In 1457, when unmarried, she lived with Lady Pole, as appears from Letter cvii. p. 82. She had been now lately married to Robert Ponyngs or Poynings, whom she survived, and afterwards married Sir George Browne, of Beechworth Castle, in Surrey, and was living in 1485.

To my right worshipful mother, Agnes Paston.

RIGHT worshipful and my most entirely-beloved mother, in the most lowly manner I recommend me unto your good motherhood, beseeching you daily and nightly of your motherly blessing, evermore desiring to hear of your welfare and prosperity, the which I pray God to continue and increase to your heart's desire; and if it liked your good

[1] What the word drawte means, when applied to a chamber, I am not certain.

[2] Countewery must mean his counter, desk, or board to sit and write, &c., at.

[3] The child now brought home seems to have been at nurse at Rockland Tofts.

[4] The marriage of his sister Elizabeth was an object of great consequence to his mother, as those two did not, from many things which occur, agree properly together; but I cannot ascertain, from the pedigree of the family of Knivet, which of them is here meant.

motherhood to hear of me and how I do at the making of this letter, I was in good hele (*health*) of body, thanked be Jesu; and as for my master, my best beloved that ye call, and I must needs call him so now, for I find none other cause, and as I trust to Jesu none shall, for he is full kind unto me, and is as busy as he can to make me sure of my jointure, whereto he is bound in a bond of a thousand pounds to you mother, and to my brother John, and to my brother William, and to Edmund Clere,[1] the which needed no such bond; wherefore, I beseech you good mother, as our most singular trust is in your good motherhood, that my master, my best beloved, fail not of the hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) at the beginning of this term, the which ye promised him to his marriage, with the remanent of the money of father's will; for I have promitted (*promised*) faithfully to a gentleman called Bain, that was one of my best beloved's sureties, and was bound for him in two hundred pounds, of which he rehearseth for to receive at the beginning of this term one hundred and twenty pounds, and if he fail thereof at this time he will claim the whole of us, the which were to us too great an hurt; and he cannot make an end with none of his other sureties without this said silver, and that can my brother John tell you well enough and it lusteth (*listeth*) him to do so, and in all other things. As to my Lady Pool, with whom I sojourned, that ye will be my tender and good mother that she may be paid for all the costs done to me before my marriage; and to Christopher Houson, as ye wrote unto my brother John that it should have been so; and that it please your good motherhood to give credence to William Worcester; and Jesu for his great mercy save you! Written at London, the Wednesday the 3rd day of January.

By your humble daughter,

ELIZABETH PONYNGS.

Elyzabeth Ponyngs

London,
Wednesday,
3d January, 1458-9. 37 H. VI.

[1] Edmund Clere was the second son of John Clere, Esq., of Ormesby, and died in 1463.

LETTER CXXV.—(LXXXII. vol. iii. p. 333.)

[THIS letter from Hugh a Fenne in London to J. Paston in Norwich, dated March 1, 1458-9, contains details and instructions relative to Sir J. Fastolf's law business, which the writer wishes were concluded, that he might "have the better leisure to dispose himself godly, and beset (*ordain*) his lands and his goods to the pleasure of God, and the weal of his soul, that all men may say he dieth a wise man and a worshipful:" it possesses nothing else of interest.]

LETTER CXXVI.—(LXXXIII. vol. iii. p. 337.)

We see here a plain, manly, and sensible letter from a son, who, by some misconduct, had given his father offence: his sorrow for having done amiss is properly expressed, and his promises for future amendment appear to be sincere. The offence seems to have been some personal ill behaviour to his father, if we may judge from what he says here, and from what his mother mentions in a letter to J. Paston in the following month (see Letter CXXVIII.). This is the first letter in this collection from John, afterwards Sir John Paston, knight.

To my right worshipful father, John Paston, Esq., be this letter delivered in hasty wise.

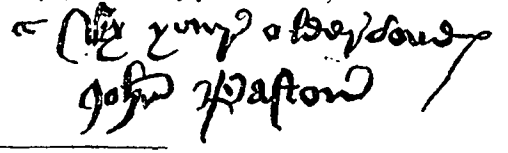
RIGHT worshipful Sir, in the most lowly wise I commend me to your good fatherhood, beseeching you of your blessing; might it please your fatherhood to remember and consider the pain and heaviness that it hath been to me since your departing out of this country, here abiding till the time it please you to show me grace, and till the time that by report my demeaning be to your pleasing; beseeching you to consider that I may not nor have no mean to seek you as I ought to do, saving under this form, which I beseech you be not taken to no displeasure, nor am

not of power to do anything in this country for worship or profit of you, nor ease of your tenants which might and should be to your pleasing; wherefore I beseech you of your fatherly pity to tender the more this simple writing; as I shall out of doubt hereafter do that shall please you to the uttermost of my power and labour; and if there be any service that I may do, if it please you to command me, or if I may understand it, I will be as glad to do it as anything earthly, if it were anything that might be to your pleasing. And no more, but Almighty God have you in keeping.

Written at Norwich, the 5th day of March.

By your older son, JOHN PASTON.

Norwich, Monday, 5th of March,
1458-9. 37 H. VI.



LETTER CXXVII.—(LXXXIV. vol. iii. p. 339.)

As this is the only letter in this collection written by Sir John Fastolf to a man of superior rank to himself, I have given it, that his manner of expressing himself in such a situation may be seen. The letter has no direction, having been originally enclosed in a cover, but by the contents is plainly intended for the Duke of Norfolk, his "castle of Framlingham" being mentioned. The time of its being written, too, can be nearly ascertained, Sir John mentioning not only his age, but, in the part that is intended to be erased, his infirmities likewise, we may therefore conclude that it was written in the last year of his life.

RIGHT high and mighty prince, my right noble and good lord, in my right humble wise I recommend me to your good grace, and for the noble lordship and supportation showed unto me at all times, I beseech our Lord God guerdon (*reward*) you, whereas I may not, but only as your daily and continual beadsman now in mine age pray for the good prosperity of your right high and noble estate, as I am greatly bound to do; praying tenderly your highness to continue your good lordship and supportation in the matters touching your servant John Porter, and my poor chaplain Sir Thomas Howes, trusting verily to God, that with the supportation of your good lordship, their matters shall yet come to a good conclusion in punishing of perjury and embracery[1] that many years hath been and yet is used in this shire, which were great merit, and, to my conceit, in you that are so noble a prince, a singular renown, as for the best deed that may be done for the weal of both shires.

And in like wise that it please your right good grace to continue your noble favour and supportation to me in remedying the force done by Sir Philip Wentworth, keeping now wrongful possession of certain lands in Suffolk, nigh your castle of Framlingham, which lands certain of my friends, to my use,[2] have of the king's grant by his letters patent before any patent that the said Sir Philip hath, which is my singular matter in mine own part that I have now to do, as my cousin Paston can inform your lordship, for he knoweth the matter and mine whole intent, to whom your good grace like to give credence, he cometh to await upon your lordship at this time, as I understand by my cousin, your servant Richard Southwell, your lordship desired (*this is scratched out, but legible, "and to pardoine me for necessite causeth me, in as moche as I may not come in myn owne p^rsone as my will were."*)

Right high and mighty prince, my noble and right good lord, I beseech the Holy Ghost be with you, and evermore send you the accomplishment of your right noble desires to his pleasure and yours.

Written at my poor place of Caister, the second day of April.

Your humble man and servant,

JOHN FASTOLF.

Caister,
2nd of April,
about 1459. 37 H. VI.

[1] [Embracery is an attempt to influence a jury corruptly, and was punishable by fine and imprisonment under several statutes of Edw. IV. See Blackstone's Com., b. iv. c. 10.]

[2] *Use* in original; Fenn translates, by mistake, *ease*.

LETTER CXXVIII.—(XLIV. vol. i. p. 175.)

We see in this letter the method of raising men was by sending a letter under the Privy Seal, and sometimes by the king himself, commanding the attendance of the persons named, at a certain time and place, with &c., according to their degree. These privy seals seem to have been issued in April, 1459, when the k &c., were at Coventry, raising an army to oppose the Duke of York and the Earl of Salisbury. An J. Paston's son herein mentioned was his eldest, he might then be about eighteen or twenty years of age.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me unto you; pleaseth you to weet that on Thursday last was, there were brought unto this town many privy seals, and one of them was indorsed to you, and to Hastyngs, and to five or six other gentlemen; and another was sent unto your son, and indorsed to himself alone, and assigned (*signed*) within with the king's own hand; and so were but few that were sent as it was told me; and also there were more special terms in his than were in others; I saw a copy of those that were sent unto other gentlemen; the intent of the writing was, that they should be with the king at Leicester the 10th day of May, with as many persons defensibly arrayed as they might according to their degree, and that they should bring with them for their expenses for two months.

As for the letter that was indorsed to you, and to others, it was delivered to William Yelverton, for there appeared no more of the remulaunt (*remaining*).

Hastyngs is forth into Yorkshire; I pray you that ye vouchsafe to send word in haste how ye will that your son be demeaned herein. Men think here, that be your well-willers, that ye may no less do than to send him forth.

As for his demeaning since ye departed, in good faith, it hath been right good, and lowly, and diligent, in oversight of your servants and other things, the which I hope ye would have been pleased with and ye had been at home; I hope he will be well demeaned to please you hereafterward.

He desired Arblaster to bemoan [1] to you for him; and was right heavy of his demeaning to you, as I sent you word also by Arblaster how I did to him after that ye were gone; and I beseech you heartily that ye vouchsafe to be his good father, for I hope he is chastised, and will be the worthier hereafter.

As for all other things at home, I hope that I and others shall do our part therein as well as we may; but as for money it cometh but slowly, and God have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters.

Written in haste at Norwich on the Sunday next before the Ascension day.[2]

Sir, I would be right glad to hear some good tidings from you.

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Sunday, 29 April,
1459. 37 H. VI.

LETTER CXXIX.—(LXXXV. vol. iii. p. 343.)

THIS letter appears to have been written not long before the death of Sir John Fastolf, which happened in November, 1459. He expresses in it his anxiety for the settlement of his estate at Caister for the purposes of religion, and wishes much for the presence of his cousin Paston. The language is a mixture of Latin and English. [It is written by Dr. John Brackley to J. Paston.]

[1] [*Bemene* in original; more probably *be mean to you*—mediator to you.]

[2] In 1459, 37 Hen. VI., Whitsunday was the 13th of May; Ascension day the 3d of May; the Sunday before, the 29th of April; and the Thursday before that, the 26th. These dates will agree with the time mentioned in the privy seals for their attendance.

LETTER CXXX.—(LXXXVI. vol. iii. p. 347.)

This letter was written after the dispersion of the Duke of York's army near Ludlow, in October, 1459, as the transactions here related refer to the direction of state affairs when in the hands of Henry's friends. Commissions were granted to James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire, and Thomas, Lord Scales, and others, to apprehend all those who had been concerned in the late rebellion, and to punish them according to law. It appears here that J. Paston was supposed to favour the York party, and from the expressions contained in Dr. Brackley's letters he certainly did so.

Brother John Brakle or Brackley, the son of John Brakle, a dyer, was born at Norwich, and, about the year 1418, 6 H. V., entered when very young into the Convent of the Grey Friars, or Friars Minors, at Norwich; he afterwards took a doctor's degree in divinity, and became a famous preacher. He was an intimate friend of and chaplain to Sir John Fastolf, who appointed him one of his executors; he was also much connected with the Paston family, being chaplain to the judge, and tutor to Sir John Paston his grandson. He died in the year 1461 or 1462, and was buried in the church of his own convent. The style and language of his letters here produced are very different from those of the other writers of this period here brought together, as they abound with quotations from the Old and New Testament, and are often intermixed with sentences in Latin of his own composition. I have endeavoured to give these letters to the reader as accurately as possible, but in two or three places I have been obliged to omit a sentence or two, as the contractions, added to the smallness and confusedness of the hand-writing, have made them so illegible, that after the most careful attention and examination, I have been forced to give up the deciphering; and I have likewise referred the reader to the places whence the quotations are taken.

Carissimo suo magistro, Johanni Paston, Armigroe.

Jesus, Maria, &c.

Right reverend master and most trusty friend in earth, as lowly as I can or may I recommend me, &c.

Sir, in faith I was sore afraid that ye had a great letting, that ye came not on Wednesday to meet, &c., by my faith and (*if*) ye had been here ye should have had right good cheer, &c.; and have fared right well after your pleasure, &c., with more, &c.

Sir John Tatteshall is at one with Heydon, &c., and Lord Scales hath made a loveday[1] with the prior and Heydon in all matters, except the matter of Snoring, &c. And the said prior spake masterly to the jurors, &c., and told them and (*if*) they had dreaded God and hurt of their souls, they would have some instruction of the one party as well as of the other, but they were so bold, they were not afraid, for they found no bones to say in their verdict as Thomas Todenham and John Heydon would, &c.

A lewd doctor of Ludgate preached on Sunday fort'night at Paul's, charging the people that no man should pray for these lords traytors,[2] &c., and he had little thank, as he was worthy, &c., and for his lewd demeaning his brethren are had in the less favour at London, &c. Dr. Pinchbeck and Dr. Westhawe, great preachers and parsons at London, be now late made monks of Charter-house at Sheen, one at the one place and another at the other place, &c.

The chancellor[3] is not good to these lords, &c., for he feareth the Earl of March will claim by inheritance the Earldom of Ha .. .. ..[4] &c., of which matter I heard great speech in Somersetshire, &c.

Wyndham, Heydon, Todenham, Blake, W. Chamberleyne, and Wentworth have late commissions to take for traytors and send to the next gaol all persons fautorers (*favourers*) and well-willers to the said lords, &c. Master Radcliff and ye have none of commissions directed to you, &c., for ye be holden favourable, &c.

Wyndham and Heydon be named here causers of these commissions, &c.

On Monday last at Cromer[5] was the oar and the books of registry of the admiralty taken away from my Lord Scales's men by a great multitude of my Lord Roos's men, &c. the Lord Scales is to my Lord Prince, &c. to wait on him, &c. he saith, per Deum

[1] Lofedays, or lovedays, were days on which arbitrations were made, and differences settled amongst neighbours.

[2] We have here an instance of the pulpit being used for political purposes, and the lords here meant were the Earls of March, Warwick, and Salisbury, and others in the Duke of York's interest.

[3] William de Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester.

[4] The original letter is here defective.

[5] Cromer is a sea-port, on the north part of the Norfolk coast, where the Court of Admiralty appears to have been held by the Lord Scales, as Lord Admiral of the county. The Lord Roos here mentioned was most probably in the opposite interest.

sanctum, as we say here, he shall be admiral,' or he shall lye thereby, &c., by my faith here is a coisy (*unsettled*) word (*world*). Walsham of Chancery that never made leasing (*lying*), told me that Bocking was with my Lord Chancellor this term, but I asked not how many times, &c.

As I have written to you often before this, "Facite vobis amicos de mammona iniquitatis," (*Luke* xvi. 9.)

Thomas Todenham, Johannes Heydon, et J. Wyndham cum cæteris magistri Fastolf fallacibus famulis magnam gerunt ad vos invidiam, quod excelleritis eos in bonis, &c. Judas non dormit, &c. "Noli zelare facientes iniquitatem quoniam tanquam fenum velociter arescent, et quemadmodum olera herbarum cito per Dei gratiam decident." Ideo sic in Psalmo. "Spera in Domino et fac bonitatem, et pascêris in divitiis ejus et delectare in Domino et dabit tibi petitiones cordis tui." (*Psalm* xxxvii. 1, 2, 3, 4.) "Et aliter. Jacta cogitatum tuum in domino, & ipse te enutriet." (*Psalm* lv. 22.) "Utinam inquit apostolus abscindantur qui vos conturbant," &c. (*Gal.* v. 12.) "Et alibi, cavete vos a malis et importunis hominibus." (2 *Thess.* iii. 2.)

Precor gratiosum Deum qui vos et me creavit et suo pretioso sanguine nos redemit, vos vestros et vestra gratiose conservet in prosperis, et gratiosius dirigat in agendis.

Scriptum, Walsham feria 4ta in nocte cum magnâ festinatione, &c. Utinam iste mundus malignus transiret et concupiscentia ejus. Vester ad vota promptissimus.

Frater JOHANNES BRACKLEY,
Minorum Minimus.

Walsham, Norfolk, Wednesday,
1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXXI.—(LXXXVII. vol. iii. p. 353.)

We have in this letter an account of the proceedings on the death of that renowned knight and valiant soldier Sir John Fastolf, relative to his effects. After his return and settlement in his native country, he became a great builder; and at Caister are still to be seen such magnificent remains of his seat or castle, as even now do testify its former state and grandeur: it was a square building of brick, coped with freestone, each side of it being about 300 feet long, having a large and lofty tower at each corner, one of which was a few years ago standing almost entire. The hall, we are informed, was 59 feet long, and 28 broad; the whole was surrounded by a moat, and was a place in those days of strength and defence, having, in the year 1469, 9 E. IV., sustained a siege by the Duke of Norfolk, &c. After the death of Sir John Fastolf, this was for several generations the seat of the Paston family; and so continued until Clement Paston, Esq., in the reign of Elizabeth, built Oxnead-hall, which then becoming their chief place of residence, this noble mansion began to be neglected. He likewise built a splendid house in Yarmouth, and a palace in Southwark. At length, being nearly eighty-three years of age, and as he says of himself in his will, dated 4th Nov., 1459, "in good remembraunce albeit gretely vexed with sickness, and through age infebelyd," he departed this life, without issue, on Monday the 5th of November, 1459, 38 H. VI., at his manor of Caister, and was most sumptuously buried in the conventual church of St. Bennet in the Holm, in Norfolk, under the arch of the new chapel which he had lately rebuilt there, on the south side of the choir or chancel, under a marble tomb by the body of Dame Milicent his wife, [who died about 24 or 25 Hen. VI., and whose son Stephen Scrope, by her first marriage, succeeded to her estates in Wiltshire and Yorkshire.] When we consider this our worthy knight, as sprung from an ancient and honourable family, inheriting ample fortunes, but immensely increasing them through a long, laborious, and indefatigable life, spent in the service of his country, and acquiring riches at the cost of its enemies only; acting in a very high and exalted sphere, renowned for his courage and conduct in the field, and his abilities in the council, dispersing the fruits of his riches by his magnificent buildings and hospitality in his lifetime, and at his death devising the capital itself for almost every purpose he could think of useful to the public, can we help exclaiming, "Thou hast founded the fair fabric of thy fame upon a rock to last for ages?" [Whether Sir J. Fastolf deserved the character here given of him, the reader can partly judge. In the memoirs of him in the Biographia Britannica, written by Oldys, and revised and corrected by Gough, this praise is greatly transcended. It is there said, "As his valour made him a terror in war, his humanity made him a blessing in peace; all we can find in his retirement being elegant, hospitable, and generous, either as to the places of his abode, or those persons and foundations on which he showered his bounty. The streams of his treasure that fed this fountain of his munificence were numerous and plentiful, as may be seen by the jury's return to the writ of inquiry into the lands and estates whereof he was possessed at his death, in Norfolk, Suffolk, Yorkshire, and Wiltshire." To us this eulogy seems greatly in excess. He appears to have been a brave, active, and very careful man, but by no means generous, as is shown in several passages of his own letters and of others relating to him in these columns. He had no doubt large estates, and, being childless, he bequeathed great part of them to charitable or rather superstitious purposes, giving little while he lived, and endeavouring to effect his last object at as small a cost as he could. We have already alluded to the

improbability of Shakspere having had any reference to this somewhat common-place old soldier in depicting the character of his immortal Falstaff. Independently of the fact that the character was originally written under the name of Sir John Oldcastle, there is nothing in common between the two, not anything to lead to such a conclusion, except the similarity of the names, and the fact of Falstaff being contemporary with Henry V., of whom he was, however, only about ten or twelve years the elder, and whom he outlived many years. But as the subject has excited much attention, it may not be uninteresting to give a slight sketch of the life of Fastolf here.

Sir John Fastolf was born of an ancient and respectable family in Norfolk, either at Caister or Yarmouth, about 1377, and is said to have been a page in the service of Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, and afterward to have held a considerable post under Thomas, subsequently Duke of Clarence, who, as early as the 2nd Hen. IV. (1401), was made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whither Fastolf accompanied him, and where he married, in 1409, Milicent, Lady Castlecomb, daughter and heiress of Robert Lord Tibetot, and widow of Sir Stephen Scrope. Not long after his marriage we find him engaged in the wars of France, and, in 1413, the 1st of Hen. V., he was made governor of the castle of Veires in Gascony. On the taking of Harfleur by Henry V., in August, 1415, he was appointed to its command under the Duke of Exeter, but in the following October we find him dangerously engaged in the battle of Agincourt; in the same year, he and the Duke of Exeter having made a plundering expedition almost as far as Rouen, were surprised and forced to retreat by the enemy, but at length succeeded in totally defeating them; and when the constable of France laid siege to Harfleur, it was gallantly defended by Fastolf until relieved by the Duke of Bedford. He was actively engaged throughout the war during the life of Henry V., and his services seem to have been very well paid, being also made a Knight of the Garter about the end of 1417. Under the regency of the Duke of Bedford Sir John was Grand Master of his Household, and Seneschal of Normandy, and was very active and successful in his warlike enterprises. In 1421, at the battle of Vernueil, he took the Duke of Alençon prisoner, for whose ransom 200,000 crowns were paid, and for the payment of his share of which, as has been seen, Sir John was very urgent. In 1425, among other places, he took the castle of Sillie-le-Guillem, from which he received the title of baron. In 1428, during the siege of Orleans, he was despatched by the commander, the Duke of Suffolk, to the regent at Paris for supplies, of which the army were in great want; he was provided therewith, and also with a considerable force to convoy them safely to Orleans. The French, aware of his movements, attacked him on his return, but were totally defeated with a loss in killed, it is said, much exceeding the total of his force, besides prisoners and wounded. From the nature of the provisions he was conveying — barrels of herrings — this encounter was called by the French the Battle of Herrings. In 1429 the English were defeated with great loss in the battle of Patay, and though Fastolf succeeded in bringing safely off a considerable part of the army, yet his retreat, though conducted with great ability, seems to have given rise to some imputations on his character; it being even said that he was divested of his knighthood. It is upon this occurrence, and under his real name, that Shakspere dilates in the first part of Henry VI. Sir John Fastolf, from these letters appears to have had so little chivalry in his composition that it is no wonder he became unpopular, even by his prudence, when contrasted with the Talbots and Bedfords of his time, though by no means liable to the imputations of either cowardice or treachery. Hall says, "the Duke of Bedford took from him the image of St. George and his Garter, though afterwards, by means of friends and apparent causes of good excuse, the same were to him again delivered, against the mind of the Lord Talbot." According to Anstis (Hist. of the Order of the Garter), his name was never erased from the list of knights. At any rate, his disgrace was but temporary, as in 1430 he was appointed by the regent to the command of Caen in Normandy. In 1432 he was sent ambassador to the Council of Basle, and immediately afterward, in the same capacity, to negotiate a peace or a truce with France; and again in 1435. In the latter end of this year the Duke of Bedford died, and Sir John Fastolf was named one of the executors of his will. Richard Duke of York, who succeeded to the regency, had so high an opinion of the merit of Sir John, that he settled an annuity upon him of 20*l.* a-year. For about four years he seems to have continued quietly in his government in Normandy, and in 1440 finally returned to England. He does not appear to have distinguished himself in the domestic politics of his time, although not wholly inactive; and after an illness of nearly five months' duration, he died on the 5th of November, 1459. Of his will and its consequences to the Paston family, we are told something in the foregoing letters, and shall learn more hereafter. The list of his landed estates is very long, but as it contains only their names, without quantity or value, has no general interest. A part of his personality is stated as follows:—In coin, 2643*l.* 10*s.*; gold plate, 10lbs.; silver plate, 1225lbs.]

To my master, John Paston, in Norfolk.

RIGHT well-beloved brother, I recommend me to you, certifying you that on Friday last was in the morning Worcester and I were come to London by eight of the clock, and we spake with my Lord Chancellor,[1] and I found him well disposed in all things, and ye shall find him right profitable to you, &c.

And he desired me to write you a letter in his name, and put trust in you in gathering of the goods together, and pray you to do so, and have all his goods out of every place of his, and his own place, wheresoever they were, and lay them secretly where as ye

1 William de Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester.

thought best at your assignment, and till that he speak with you himself; and he said ye should have all lawful favour.

I purpose to ride to him this day for writs of diem clausit extremum,[1] and I suppose ye shall have a letter sent from himself to you.

As for the goods of Paul's they are safe enough, and this day we have grant to have the goods out of Bermondsey[2] without advice of any man saving Worcester, Plomer, and I myself, and nobody shall know of it but we three.

My Lord Treasurer[3] speaketh fair, but yet many advise me to put no trust in him; there is laboured many means to intitle the king in his goods. Southwell is escheator, and he is right good and well disposed.

My Lord of Exeter[4] claimeth title in my master's place, with the appurtenances, in Southwark, and verily had purposed to have entered, and his counsel were with us, and spake with Worcester and me; and now afterwards they have sent us word that they would move my lord to sue by means of the law, &c.

I have spoken with my Lord of Canterbury, and Master John Stokes, and I find them right well disposed both, &c.

Item, to-morrow or the next day ye shall have another letter, for by that time we shall know more than we do now.

My Lord Chancellor would that my master should be buried worshipfully, and one hundred marks (66*l.* 13. 4*d.*) alms done for him; but this day I shall wholly know his intent; Master John Stokes hath the same conceit and alms giving.

Harry Fenyngley is not in this town, nor the Lord Beauchamp.

Item, we have gotten men of the spiritual law withholden with us, what case soever happen; we have Master Robert Kent; but in anywise have all the goods there together, and tarry for no letting, though ye should do it by day-light openly, for it is my Lord Chancellor's full intent that ye should do so.

As for William Worcester he trusteth verily ye would do for him and for his avail in reason, and I doubt not and (*if*) he may verily and faithfully understand you so disposed to him ward, ye shall find him faithful to you; in likewise I understand by him he will never have other master but his old master, and to my conceit it were pity but if he should stand in such case by mine master that he should never need service, considering how my master trusted him, and the long years that he hath been with him in, and many shrewd journey for his sake, &c.

I write you no more because ye shall (*have*) another letter written to-morrow. Written at London the 12th day of November in haste.

By WILLIAM PASTON.

London, Monday,
12 Nov., 1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXXII.—(LXXXVIII. vol. iii. p. 359.)

William Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester, the first of Sir John Fastolf's executors, was at this time Lord Chancellor, to whom the others applied for his advice and directions concerning the execution of his will. He here gives them fully, but at the same time advises them to apply to some one learned in the spiritual law concerning the administration, &c. In times of popery the "Month's Mind" was a monthly solemnity in memory of the deceased, when prayers were offered and alms given for the health of his soul, &c. William Wainfleet was consecrated Bishop of Winchester in 1447, and continued there till his death, in 1486, just living to see the line of Lancaster (to which he had ever been a well-wisher) restored to the crown in the person of Henry VII. He was a worthy prelate, and a man of great wisdom and integrity. There is no address to these directions.

BE it remembered, that forasmuch as Sir John Fastolf, late deceased, of great affection, hath put me in trust to be one of his executors, and since it is desired (*of*) me to

[1] This was a writ which issued out of Chancery to the escheator of the county, upon the death of any of the king's tenants in capite, to inquire by a jury of what lands he died seized, and of what value, and who was next heir to him.

[2] An abbey in Southwark, where some of his goods were deposited.

[3] James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire and Ormond. [In orig. "brod [*brother*] tr'sorer," probably an error in transcribing, and the translation is right.]

[4] Henry Holland, Duke of Exeter.

know my disposition herein, mine advice is thus, that first an inventory be made wholly of his goods and catell (*chattells*) in all places, and that they be laid in sure ward by your discretions, till the executors, or the most part of those that he put his great trust upon, speak with me, and make declaration to me of his last will, to the accomplishment whereof I will be special good lord.

Furthermore, as touching his burying and month's mind keeping, that it be done worshiply (*worshipfully*) according to his degree, and for the health of his soul, and that alms be given in masses saying, and to poor people, to the sum of an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) till that otherwise we speak together; and I can agree right well that his servants have their rewards betimes according to his will, to the intent that they may be better disposed, and to pray for the welfare of his soul; taking advice of a learned man in spiritual law for the charge of administration till the executors come together, or the most part, that his trust was most upon, to take the administration.

WILLIAM WINTON.

November or December,
1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXXIII.—(XLV. vol. i. p. 179.)

This letter was written at Coventry, where the parliament appears to have met, after the desertion of some and the surrender of others of the Duke of York's troops to the army of Henry VIth, commanded by the Dukes of Somerset and Exeter, near Ludlow, in October, 1459: and though it contains chiefly accounts of a private nature, yet as a list of those there attainted is affixed, it seemed worthy of insertion.

To my right worshipful masters, William Yelverton, justice, John Paston, and Henry Filongley,[1] *and to each of them.*

RIGHT worshipful Sirs, I recommend me to you; and like it you to weet that my Lord Chancellor is a right good and tender lord in all your matters, and so will continue; and my Lord Treasurer in likewise, which both have answered Wyndham not aldermost (*altogether*) to his pleasure, because of his noiseful language; saying how he might have no law, and that my Lord Chancellor was not made executor but for maintenance,[2] with many other words nothing profitable nor furthering his intents. As for any particular matters, the parliament, as yet, abideth upon the great matters of attainder and forfeiture; and so there be many and diverse particular bills put in, but none ready, nor touching us, as nigh as we can hearken, to which Playters and I attend daily, trusting on my lords abovesaid, my Lord Privy Seal, and other good lords, and many also of your acquaintance and ours, that and (*if*) anything be, we shall soon have knowledge. The chief justice is right hearty, and sayeth full well and kindly of my master, whom Jesu for his mercy pardon, and have you in his blessed governance. Written at Coventry the morrow after Saint Nicholas.[3] And as to money, I delivered unto the under-treasurer a letter from Master Filongley, and I found him right well disposed to do that may please you in all our matters; and take no money of him as yet, for we have no need to spend any sums as yet, nor with God's grace shall not have. I came to this town of Coventry such day sev'night as the parliament began; and as for such things as I could hearken after, I send to William Worcester a great bill of tidings to show you and all.

Yesterday in the morning came in the Earl of Pembroke[4] with a good fellowship; and the Duchess of York[5] came yester evening late, as the bringer hereof shall more plainly declare (*to*) you, to whom ye like to give credence.

The Bishop of Exeter[6] and the Lord Grey

[1] [This name is spelt in such a variety of forms that it is quite impossible to fix the orthography.]

[2] [Maintenance is a law-term, implying a suit or quarrel to the disturbance or hindrance of rights, and if the party is to have any advantage therein, it is called Champerty. There have been many statutes passed against both.]

[3] St. Nicholas's day, 6th of December.

[4] Jasper of Hatfield, half-brother to Henry VI., Earl of Pembroke.

[5] Cicely, daughter of Ralph Nevile, Earl of Westmoreland; she was deprived of all her goods, &c.

[6] George Nevile, sixth son of Richard Earl of Salisbury, and brother of Richard Earl of Warwick: he was afterwards Archbishop of York.

(*of*) Ruthin[1] have declared them full worshipfully to the king's great pleasure.

Playters and I (*have*) written you a letter by Norff, yeoman for the king's mouth.

Your

JOHN BOCKING.[2]

Coventry, 7th of December, 1459.
38 H. VI.

The following list of those of the Duke of York's party who were attainted by parliament is pinned to the above letter:—

The Duc of York.	Therle of Warrwyk.
Therle of Marche.	Therle of Salusbury.
Therle of Rutland.	The Lord Powys.
The Lord Clynton.	Edward Bourghcier sq.
The Countesse of Sarr[3]	A broy' of his.
S[r]. Thomas Nevyle.	Thom's Vaugh'n.
S[r]. John Nevyle.	Thom's Colte.
S[r]. Thom's Haryngton.	Thomas Clay.
S[r]. Thom's o' Parre.	John Denham.
S[r]. John Conyers.	Thomas Moryng.
S[r]. John Wenlok.	John Oter.
S[r]. Will'm Oldhall.	Maistr Ric Fisher.

Hastyngs and oy' that as yet we can not know y'e names, &c.

As for y'e Lord Powys he come inne and hadde g'ce as for his lyf, but as for hise gods ye forfeture passid.

LETTER CXXXIV.—(XLVI. vol. i. p. 183.)

John Berney, Esq., appears to have been the son of John Berney, by Isabel, daughter and heir of Sir John Heveningham, knight, and died without issue, in 1461. He had served under Sir John Fastolf, in the wars in France, as appears by a part of this letter where W. Worcester says, "You had verrey and faythfull lofe to my maistr yn the yeers and dayes that ye dyd him s'vice yn the werrs and suffred prysonment and manye a sherp day for hys sake not rewarded."

To the right worshipful Sir, John Berneye, Esq., at Castre being.

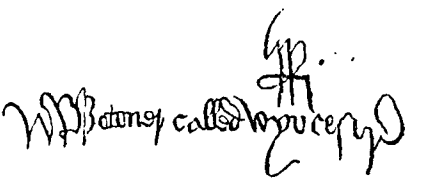
RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you. (*Here follow complaints against Fryer Brakley, &c., concerning Sir John Fastolf's interment, affairs, &c., &c.*)

As to tidings here, I send some off hand, written to you and others, how the Lord Rivers,[4] Sir Anthony[4] his son, and others, have won Calais,[5] by a feeble assault made at Sandwich by Denham, Esquire,[6] with the number of 800 men, on Tuesday between four and five o'clock in the morning. But my Lady Duchess[7] is still again received in Kent. The Duke of York is at Dublin, strengthened with his earls and homagers as ye shall see by a bill. God send the king victory of his enemies, and rest and peace amongst his lords!——

I am right greatly heavied for my poor wife for the sorrow she taketh; and must leave her and her country; I shall nothing take from her more than a little spending-money till better may be. And the blessed Trinity keep and send you health. Written at London hastily the Monday after I departed from you, 1459-60.

Your,

W. BOTONER, called WYRCESTER.



London,
Monday, January,
1459-60. 38 H. VI.

[1] Edmund Lord Grey, afterwards Earl of Kent.

[2] John Bocking was in employment under J. Paston.

[3] Alice, daughter and heir of Thomas Montague, Earl of Salisbury, wife of Richard Nevile, in her right, Earl of Salisbury.

[4] See notes to the following letter.

[5] The expression of Lord Rivers, &c., having won Calais, seems to be meant as a sneer upon him, as he commanded the ships going to the Duke of Somerset with supplies to enable him to drive out the Earl of Warwick from Calais, and take possession of it as governor under the king's commission.

[6] John Denham, Esq., afterwards Sir John Denham.

[7] Cicely, Duchess of York.

LETTER CXXXV.—(XLVII. vol. i. p. 187.)

This bold plan, for surprising the admiral and taking his fleet, was laid by the Earl of Warwick, &c. at Calais, and executed with success by Sir John Denham, at Sandwich, in January, 1459. Lord Rivers and his son, when prisoners, being only rated by the Lords, shows in them great moderation; as the cruelties usually exercised on prisoners of consequence in the civil wars of those ferocious times would have warranted their immediate execution. [We need not repeat, that, without at all apologising for the cruelties actually committed, we think there were fewer in these "ferocious times," than in any civil war in any other civilised country, except our own at a later period.]

To his right worshipful brother, John Paston, be this letter delivered.

AFTER due recommendation had, please you to weet that we came to London upon the Tuesday by noon next after our departure from Norwich, and sent our men to inquire after my Lord Chancellor,[1] and Mr. John Stokes, and Malmesbury. And as for my Lord Chancellor, he was departed from London, and was rode to the king two days ere we were come to London; and as we understand he hasted him to the king, because of my Lord Rivers being taken at Sandwich, &c.

(*Then follows a long account of private business, which is here omitted.*)

As for tidings, my Lord Rivers[2] was brought to Calais and before the lords with eight score torches, and there my Lord of Salisbury rated him, calling him, "Knave's son,[3] that he should be so rude to call him and these other lords traitors; for they should be found the king's true liege men when he should be found a traitor, &c."

And my Lord of Warwick rated him, and said "that his father was but a squire, and brought up with King Henry V., and since made himself by marriage, and also made a lord; and that it was not his part to have such language of lords being of the king's blood.

And my Lord of March rated him in likewise.

And Sir Anthony[4] was rated for his language of all the three lords in likewise.

Item, the king cometh to London ward, and as it is said rereth (*raiseth*) the people as he come; but it is certain there be commissions made into diverse shires, that every man be ready, in his best array, to come when the king send for him.

Item, my Lord Roos is come from Guisnes.

No more, but we pray to Jesu have you in his most merciful keeping. Amen.

Written at London the Monday next after St. Paul's day.

Your brother,

WILLIAM PASTON.

London,
Monday, 29th of January,
1459. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXXXVI.—(LXXXIX. vol. iii. p. 361.)

We have here the private letter of a great nobleman, wherein he interests himself in the welfare and happiness of his domestics in a manner so very pleasing, as to show the goodness of his heart, and the kind attention which he paid to those connected with him. [See also to the same effect Letter xliv. p. 53.]

To our right trusty and entirely well-beloved John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT trusty and right entirely well-beloved, we greet you heartily well; and it is so as ye know well yourself, we have and long time have had the service of Thomas Denyes, by continuance whereof we wend (*thought*) to have had his attendance at our lust (*pleasure*), and nevertheless we have so straightly examined his demeaning, that we feel and plainly conceive that the love and affection which he hath to a gentlewoman not far from you, and which ye be privy to, as we suppose, causeth him alway to desire towards

[1] Laurence Booth, Bishop of Durham.

[2] Richard Widville, Lord Rivers, married Jaquetta, daughter of Peter of Luxemburg, Earl of St. Paul, and widow of John, Duke of Bedford, by whom he was father to Elizabeth, the widow of Sir John Gray, and afterwards queen of Edward IV. the now Earl of March, by whom he was created Earl Rivers, &c. He was beheaded in July, 1469, by the Lancastrian mutineers in Northamptonshire.

[3] The word knave appears, by this expression, at this time to have been used in a bad sense. [To a nobleman certainly, as it was degradatory of his rank. It is used in the same sense as "his father was but a squire," by Warwick.]

[4] Sir Anthony Widville, afterwards Lord Scales and Earl Rivers, was beheaded by the tyrannic order of Richard III. at Pontefract, on the 13th of June, 1483.

your country rather than towards such occupation as is behoveful to us. We write therefore to you, praying you heartily as ye love us, that it like you to do that labour at our instance, by such mean as your wisdom can seem, to move that gentlewoman in our behalf for the weal of this matter, undertaking for us that we will show our bounty to them both, if it please her that this matter take effect, so that by reason she shall have cause to take it in gree (*to be satisfied*); and if the coming thither of our person self should be to (*the*) pleasure of her, we will not leave our labour in that; wherefore we pray you that ye will do your part herein, as ye will we do for you in time coming, and that ye see us in haste. The Holy Trinity keep you. Written at Wivenhoe, the 17th day of May.

The Earl of Oxford.

OXENFORD.

Wivenhoe, in Essex, 17th of May, before 1460. 38 H. VI.

NUMBER CXXXVII.—(XC. vol. iii. p. 363.)

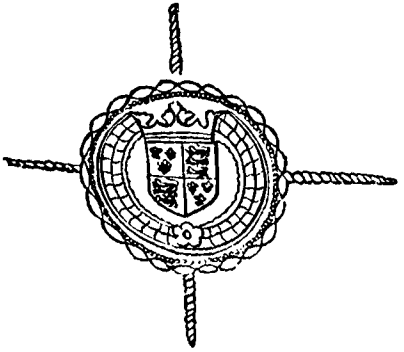
The matters here commanded by the king to be respited, were probably some disputes relative to the manor of Gresham, a moiety of which had been purchased by Sir William Paston, the judge, and the other moiety had belonged to Sir William Molyns, the present Lord Molyns's wife's ancestor. As far as concerned his lordship, perhaps a respite during his absence on the king's affairs might be necessary, but to extend that to his tenants and servants seems an hardship upon the person who was plaintiff and thought himself aggrieved. The letter, however, is couched in the civilest language possible, and sealed with the king's privy seal on red wax, having the royal arms of France and England quarterly, surmounted by a royal coronet, and encompassed with a collar of SS. [We give it below, together with the king's autograph. This letter appears to be a continuation of the affair noticed in Letters cxii. to cxv.]

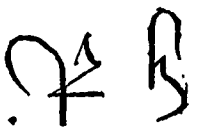
To our trusty and well-beloved John Paston, Esq.

BY THE KING.

TRUSTY and well beloved, forasmuch as our right trusty and well-beloved the Lord Molyns is by our special desire and commandment waiting upon us, and now, for divers considerations moving us, we purpose to send him into certain places for to execute our commandments, for the which he ne may (*may not*) be attendant to be in our counties of Norfolk and Suffolk at the time of our commissioners sitting upon our commission of oyer (*and*) determiner within the same our counties. We therefore desire and pray you, that considering his attendance upon us, and that he must apply him to execute our commandment, ye will respite as for anything attempting against him, as for any matters that ye have to do or say against him, or any other of his servants, well-willers, or tenants, because of him, unto time he shall mowe be (*be able to be*) present to answer thereunto; wherein ye shall minister unto us cause of pleasure, and over that deserve of us right good thanks. Given under our signet at our palace of Westminster, the 18th day of September.

Westminster, 18th of September, before 1460. 39 H. VI.





LETTER CXXXVIII.—(XCI. vol. iii. p. 365.)

[Lord Scales was of the party opposed to J. Paston, and we must not therefore accept this accusation against the latter as complete proof of his injustice; but it may rather lead us not to believe in the charges frequently made against other persons opposed to the Paston interests.]

To our trusty and well-beloved friend, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved friend, I greet you heartily well, and will ye weet that Wotton is ever crying and calling upon me to write unto you for his land: wherefore at the reverence of God considering the simpleness of them all, I pray you that ye put them at a certain (*certainty*), and let them all that they ought to have of right, for their crying cause men to think ye do them great wrong, which I wote (*know*) well ye would be sorry to do.

Our Lord have you in his governance. Written at Middleton, the 16th day of October.

Your friend, SCALES.

Middleton,
16th of October,
before 1460. 39 H. VI.

LETTER CXXXIX.—(XCII. vol. p. iii. 367.)

[This letter is a curious instance of the caution (arising from insecurity, at a period when all *news* was only gossip, through the want of a press,) with which information was received. The Duke hesitates to believe the letter from London till he has tested its truth by a circumstance within his reach. The request that the letter be burnt is also singular. The official or semi-official letters appear to have travelled very slowly.]

To my master, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you, and please it you to weet of our new tidings here; as this day came writing both to my lord [1] and to my lady from London, that there be certain letters directed to my lord from my lady his Mother,[2] and divers other lords, for to have Daniel[3] in his favour again, and as it is supposed by the means of the Duke of Somerset, for he hath been right conversant with him all this quarter of this year. And also they that sent this writing say plainly that the Lord Scales is good lord to him, and that he hath promised him to make Sir Thomas Todenham, Heydon, and him accorded, and other men in the country, and that he shall be suffered to enter into Brayston, and keep it, to the entent that the country shall think, and my Lord also,[4] that he hath great favour amongst the lords of the council, and cause men to fear him the more. Whether it be thus or no I cannot say, nevertheless me thinketh ye shall soon know if Mounford will agree that he shall enter into Brayston, and if that be true, all the remanent shall seem the more likely.

I pray you breme (*burn*) this letter when ye have read it. My lord and my lady say ye shall be right welcome and (*if*) ye will see them this Christmas; I report me to your wisdom, and God have you in his keeping. Written at Framlingham, the 18th day of December. RICHARD SOUTHWELL.[5]

Framlingham, 18th of December,
before 1460. 39 H. VI.

[1] John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, married Ellenor, daughter of William Bourchier, Earl of Eu, in Normandy.

[2] Catharine, daughter of Ralph, Earl of Westmoreland, and widow of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.

[3] Thomas Daniel, Esq. was constable of Risingcastle, and married Margaret, sister of John Howard, afterwards Duke of Norfolk. He is said to have been attainted in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV., but afterwards restored and taken into favour.

[4] [*i. e.* the Duke of Norfolk.]

[5] Richard Southwell, Esq. married Amy, daughter and co-heir of Sir Edmund Witchingham, of Wood-Rising, Esq., and so became possessor of that estate.

LETTER CXL.—(L. vol. i. p. 195.)

This letter, written from Framlingham Castle in Suffolk, the ancient seat of the Mowbrays, Dukes of Norfolk, must have been written before 1460, when Viscount Beaumont was slain. It is all of the same hand-writing, and that most probably of the Duchess's secretary, the form of the letters not being like those of a female hand. The matter recorded shows the princely establishment of the households of the nobility in that age; and that they imitated the royal appointments, by having the officers on their own establishments under their letters patent.

To my right worshipful and right entirely well-beloved cousin, the Viscount Beaumont.

RIGHT worshipful, and right entirely well-beloved cousin, I commend me to you with all my heart, desiring to hear and verily to know of your worshipful estate, profit, health, and good prosperity; the which I beseech our Lord Jesu ever to maintain and preserve in all worship, to his pleasance and to your heart's ease.

Please it you, cousin, to weet, that your well-beloved servant Roger Hunt, and a servant of my most dread lord my husband, one William, yeoman of his ewry,[1] have communed together, and been fully thorough and agreed, that the said William shall have his office,[2] if it may please your good lordship.

Wherefore, cousin, I pray you, as my special trust is in you, that ye will, at the instance of my prayer and writing, grant by your letters patent to the said William the foresaid office, with such wages and fees as Roger your said servant hath it of you; trusting verily that ye shall find the said William a faithful servant to you, and can and may do you right good service in that office.

And, cousin, in the accomplishment of my desire in this matter ye may do me a right good pleasure, as God knoweth, whom I beseech for his mercy to have you ever in his blessed governance, and send you good life and long, with much good worship.

Written at Framlingham, the 8th day of March.

ELIANOR, *the Duchess of Norfolk.*[3]

Framlingham,
8th of March, before 1460.
39 H. VI.

LETTER CXLI.—(XCIII. vol. iii. p. 371.)

The date of this letter cannot be exactly fixed, though I believe it was written in 1460, or, if not then, it must have been written early in the reign of Edward IV., as I find there was a presentation to the church of Drayton both in 1460 and 1461, but Sir Thomas Hakon was not the person presented on either of the vacancies. East Dereham, a market town, situated nearly in the centre of the county of Norfolk, we here find in the fifteenth century a place of sufficient consequence to have an adjournment of the general quarter sessions of the peace from Norwich held in it. It has been since that period twice destroyed by fire; once on the 1st of July, 1581, and again on the 3d of the same month, in 1679. It is now a pleasant, handsome, and well-built town, inhabited by several respectable families, and furnished with many accommodations for genteel life. [East Dereham has maintained its rank from Fenn's time, and is a clean, well-built, and thriving town. Walsingham has been already noticed.]

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, please it you to weet that the cause that I wrote to you none ere [*earlier*] than I did after the sessions, was because that Yelverton held the sessions at Dereham and Walsingham the next week after the assizes, and to have knowledge what labour that was made there, and to have sent you word thereof; there was great labour made by the bailiff of Cossey, and other, for to have indicted your men both at Dereham and at

[1] An officer who had the charge of the table-linen, &c.

[2] It seems by this representation of the matter, as if Roger Hunt, the officer of the Viscount Beaumont, had sold his office under his lordship to William, yeoman of the ewry to the Duke, if, through the Duchess's recommendation, Lord Beaumont should think proper to accept him.

[3] Ellenor, Duchess of Norfolk, wife of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, was the daughter of William Bourchier, Earl of Eu, in Normandy, and sister of Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex. The Duke died in 1461, and was buried at Thetford, where his Duchess was likewise buried.

Walsingham, but I purved[1] a mean that their purpose was letted at those two times.

Hugh a Fenn is in Flegg; Richard Calle spake with him this week, and he said to Richard that he and his wife would be with me here this week, towards a place of his that he hath purchased of Godered; if he come I shall make him good cheer, for it is told me of divers folks that have spoken with him, sithen (*since*) he came into Norfolk, as they feel by his saying that he oweth you right good will.

Item, as for my coming to you, if it please you that I come, I hope I shall purvey so for all things ere I come, that it shall be safe enough by the grace of God till I come again; but at the reverence of God, if ye may,[2] purvey a mean that ye may come home yourself, for that shall be most profitable to you, for "men cut large thongs here off other men's leather." I shall write to you again as hastily as I may. God have you in his keeping. Written in haste at Heylesdon, the Sunday next after the Assumption of our Lady.

Item, my cousin, Elizabeth Clere is at Ormsby, and your mother purposeth to be at her place at Caister this week, for the pestilence[3] is so fervent in Norwich that they there no longer abide there, so God help; me thinketh by my mother, that she would right fain that ye did well, and that ye might speed right well in your matters; and me thinketh by my cousin Clere that she would fain have your good will, and that she hath sworn right faithfully to me that there shall no default be found in her, nor nought hath been, if the truth might be understood, as she hopeth it shall be hereafter; she saith there is no man alive that she hath put her trust in so much as she hath done in you: she saith she wot well such language as hath been reported to you of her, otherwise than she hath deserved, causeth you to be otherwise to her than ye should be: she had to me this language weeping, and told me of divers other things, the which ye shall have knowlege of hereafter.

As for the high sheriff he demeaned him right well here to me, and he said to me, as for the replevins he would ask counsel of learned men what he might do therein, and as largely as he might do therein, or in any other matter touching you, saving himself harmless, he would do for you and for yours that he might do.

Item, I have do layd in (*caused to be laid in*) the presentation of Drayton, and have presented Sir Thomas Hakon, parson of Felthorp, the which is held right a good man and well disposed; and the Duke of Suffolk hath laid in another, and there shall be taken an inquisition thereupon, and Master Stephen is your advocate therein.

Master John Estgate is passed to God on Thursday last past, whose soul God assoil! whereof in good faith I am right sorry, for I find him right faithful to you; they die right sore in Norwich.

John Russ saith the profits that hath been taken of the manor of Caister since Sir J. Fastolf died hath been taken by Sir Thomas Howes and Jenney.

By yours, MARGARET PASTON.

Heylesdon,
Sunday after the
Assumption of our Lady,
17th of August, 1460. 38 H. VI.

I marvel that ye had no tidings from me at that time that your letter was written, for I sent you a letter by Chittock's son, that is prentice in London, and the said letter was of the demeaning at the assizes at Norwich, and of divers other matters. I pray you send me word if ye have it: as for the replevins, Richard Calle saith he hath sent you an answer of them, and also the copies of them.

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[1] [In original *p'vayd*, purveyed or provided. Fenn translates *played*.]

[2] [Fenn omits *may*.]

[3] I do not find any notice in history that any remarkable sickness raged at this time, either in Norwich or in the kingdom at large.

LETTER CXLII.—(XCIV. vol. iii. p. 377.)

This letter appears to have been written towards the latter end of the reign of Henry VI., and refers to some former transactions when Southwell appears to have been a retainer to the Duke of York. The exact date cannot be ascertained.

To the right reverend and worshipful John Paston, in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Sir, and my right trusty and well-beloved cousin, I recommend me unto you, praying you heartily to remember me unto my master Radcliff, so that by your good means I shall and may have his good mastership, the which I have effectually to my power sued for this three years, and never deserved the contrary to my knowledge, by my truth; and if it can or may be found that I have, I will obey (*submit*) me, and offer me to abide the rule [*decision*] of you and my cousin your brother, &c.

Also my Lord of Canterbury,[1] (*and*) Master Walter Blacket[2] will help forth, if need be; and as to the remanent of the lords, if the case require that ye may understand by your wisdom they be displeased with me, as I trust to God they be not, I beseech you to remember that I have aforetime been accused unto the king's highness and the queen's for owning my poor good will and service unto my Lord of York and others, &c., whereof I suppose that Thomas Bagham is remembered that I brought him once from my lady a purse and five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) therein, and to Sir Philip Wentworth another and an hundred shillings therein, for their good will and advice therein to my lady and all us that were appealed for that cause; notwithstanding the king wrote to my lord, by the means of the Duke of Somerset, that we should be avoided from him, &c. And within this two years we were in like wise laboured against to the queen, so that she wrote to my lord[3] to avoid us, saying that the king and she could nor might in no wise be assured of him and my lady as long as we were about him, with much other thing, as may be sufficiently proved by the queen's writing, under her own signet and sign-manual, the which I showed to my Lord of Canterbury and other lords, &c.

I pray you have me excused that I encumber you with these matters at this time, for me thinketh ye should will and desire me to do anything to your honour and pleasure at any time, whereto I shall be ready and well-willed ever to my power, by the grace of God, who have you ever in his keeping, and all yours.

Written at Norwich, on Saint Faith's day, in haste. Yours, RICHARD SOUTHWELL.

Norwich, 6th of October,
about 1460. 39 H. VI.

LETTER CXLIII.—(XCV. vol. iii. p. 381.)

Though this letter shows us the influence of the great men in the election of the members of the House of Commons, yet it appears from it that in this case the Duke of Norfolk's power was limited, as he could not bring in his friend and relation Sir John Howard, for I conclude he was the person mentioned in the letter, and his being called a "straunge man" most probably arose from his not having been resident in the county, as he was for a long time occupied in the wars of France. He was high-sheriff of the county of Norfolk and Suffolk in the first year of Edward IV., and by him was afterward created Lord Howard. His sovereign, Richard III., granted him the title of Duke of Norfolk, as being descended from the heir-female of the Mowbrays, and, with his royal master, he fell in the battle of Bosworth-field in 1485. [A new parliament was called in October, 1460. If this letter was written *before* 1460, as Fenn says, it must refer to the elections of 1455, referred to in Letters lxxix., lxxx., and lxxxiii., and confirms what we there stated as to the power of noblemen in elections. It is probable, however, that this letter refers only to a vacancy in the representation, and not to a general election, as the letter only mentions one member.]

To my worshipful master, John Paston, Esq.

MY worshipful master, I recommend me to you, and I thank you that it pleaseth you to take such labour for me as ye do: my servant told me ye desired to know what my Lord of Norfolk said to me when I spake of you, and

[1] Thomas Bourchier.

[2] This family came originally from the bishopric of Durham, and a descendant of it was created a baronet in 1673.

[3] John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, in whose household R. Southwell had an appointment.

he said inasmuch as Howard might not be, he would write a letter to the under-sheriff that the shire should have free election, so that Sir Thomas Todenham were not, nor none that was toward the Duke of Suffolk: he said he knew ye were never to him ward; ye may send to the under-sheriff, and see my lord's letter;[1] Howard was as wode (*mad*) as a wild bullock; God send him such worship as he deserveth; it is an evil precedent for the shire that a strange man should be chosen, and no worship to my Lord of York, nor to my Lord of Norfolk, to write for him; for if the gentlemen of the shire will suffer such inconvenience, in good faith the shire shall not be called of such worship as it hath been.

Written at Intwood, the Wednesday next after Saint John, in haste.

Your servant,

JOHN JENNEY.

Intwood, Wednesday,
before 1460. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXLIV.—(LI. vol. i. p. 199.)

[THIS letter is from Christ. Hausson, in London, dated October 12th, 1460, to J. Paston, detailing minor events which took place after the battle of Northampton in July of that year. It is entirely political, and contains nothing of novelty.]

LETTER CXLV.—(XCVI. vol. iii. p. 383.)

[We give this letter as a curious specimen of the style and language of a learned man, and an eloquent and popular preacher. See notice of Brackley in Letter cxxx. p. 99.]

To my master, John Paston, Esq., be this letter presented.

Jesu, Maria, &c.

RIGHT reverend Sir, after due recommendation; we say in this country that Heydon is for Berkshire in the Commons' House, and the Lady of Suffolk[2] hath sent up her son and his wife[3] to my Lord of York, to ask grace for a sheriff the next year, Stapilton, Boleyn, or Tyrel, *qui absit*. God send you Poynings! W. Paston, W. Rokewood, or Arblaster, ye have much to do; Jesu speed you; ye have many good prayers, what of the convent, city and country. God save our good Lord Warwick, all his brethren, Salisbury, &c., from all false covetise (*covetousness*) and favour of extortion, as they will flee utter shame and confusion. God save them and preserve (*them*) from treason and poison; let them beware thereof, for the pity of God; for if aught come to my Lord Warwick but good, farewell ye, farewell I, and all our friends; for by the way of my soul this land were utterly undone, as God forbid; their enemies boasting with good to come to their favour; but God defend them, and give them grace to know their friends from their enemies, and to cherish and prefer their friends, and lesse (*lessen*) the might of all their enemies throughout the shires of the land; and [*of those who*] my good Lord Warwick with my lord his brother (*the*) Chancellor, and my lord their father would oppose, as did Daniel, Fortescu, Alexander, Hody, Dr. Aleyn, Heydon, and Thorpe; of the writing made by them at Coventry parliament,[4] they should answer worse than sub cino or sub privo[5] (*or prino*), and this generally would I say at Paul's Cross, &c., and (*if*) I should come there, &c.

It is verified of them (*Jeremiah*, viii. 8), "vere mendacium operatus est stilus mendax scribarum, &c." And think of two verses of your Psalter, "Scribantur hæc in generatione alterâ (hujus, scilicet, parliamenti) et populus qui creabitur laudabit Deum." (*Psalm*

[1] [In the orig.—" ye may sende to the under-shreve and see my lord lre." Fenn translates—" the mayor sent to the under-sheriff and saw my lord's letter."]

[2] Alice Duchess of Suffolk, widow of William Duke of Suffolk, beheaded at sea in 1450.

[3] John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York.

[4] This relates to the Bill of Attainder.

[5] Query? The meaning of this expression.

cii. 18.) "Deleantur etiam tales perversi scriptores de libro viventium et cum justis non scribantur." (*Psalm* lxix. 28.) Et non plura, sed vos, vestros et vestra conservet Jesus graciose in prosperis et graciosius dirigat in agendis. Ex Norwico feria 4ta, nuntio festinante.

And I pray you for God's sake to be good master to John Lyster, &c. And I pray you think in this parliament of the text of Holy Scripture, "quicunque fecerit contra legem Dei, et contra legem Regis, judicium fiet de eo, vel in condemnationem substantiæ ejus, vel in carcerem, vel in exilium, vel in mortem," 1mo Esdræ vii. v. 26, et p. 2° Esdræ, 8°.[1] JOHN BRACKLEY.

Norwich, Thursday,
1460. 39 H. VI.

LETTER CXLVI.—(XCVII. vol. iii. p. 387.)

[Is another letter of Brackley's. It contains nothing of interest, and is written in a more obscure style, and with more Latin, than the preceding.]

NUMBER CXLVII.—(XCVIII. vol. iii. p. 393.)

We have in this sermon of Dr. Brackley a curious specimen of pulpit eloquence and divinity in the reign of Henry VI., commemorating the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, &c., under the visible appearance of fiery tongues. We are next informed of the three requisites for a preacher of the Gospel, and of the divine assistance which the Apostles received to enable them to preach with effect. He then sets before his audience the vanity of earthly joys, and the immensity of heavenly ones, both by precept and example. His texts are chosen with propriety, and his examples, as adduced, have their effect. There are in two or three places a few quotations which, from the smallness of the hand, and the badness of the writing, I have been obliged to give up as illegible. As the exact year in which this sermon was preached cannot be ascertained, I have placed it to follow the last letter, written by the author of it.

An ancient Whitsunday Sermon, preached by Friar Brackley (whose hand it is) at the Friers Minors Church in Norwich.[2]

FRIENDS, this holy time, as our mother holy church maketh mention, the Holy Ghost came from Heaven, and lighted on the disciples of Christ, inflaming them with cunning, and strengthening them with grace. And because the doctrine and preaching of them should go throughout all the werd (*world*); first, they were to be informed and taught cunning (*skill* or *knowledge*), and to be strengthened with audacity (*confidence*) and grace, and then to be endued[2] (*with*) and given all manner of languages, that they might preach to all manner of nations, so that those nations that they preached to might understand them, and every nation his own tongue. And so these Apostles, after that they were inspired with the Holy Ghost, wheresoever they preached, were there never so many nations present, each nation thought that they spoke in their own language, etenim illud loquebantur variis linguis Apostoli.

Friends, three things be necessary in preaching to him that shall preach through the world as the Apostles did, that is to say, cunning, boldness, and languages; if they had had cunning and none audacity, but have feared to have preached, it should little a (*have*) profited, as we have examples daily at Cambridge, exempli gratia, de clerico quis studuit sermonem, &c. And if they have both cunning and audacity, and have none eloquency nor copiousness of language, so that he preach that (*which*) his audience is most exercised in, that they understand him, else it profiteth not.

Therefore these holy Apostles before they should preach, first they were to be confirmed and strengthened. Our Lord strengthened them by under-nemyng,[4] informing, and helping, (culpando, *q.?*) ut in evangelium recumbentibus, &c.

He strengthened them with his help and grace when he breathed in them, saying, "Accipite spiritum sanctum, et quorum re-

[1] [These references are Brackley's own, but the passage is in Ezra vii. 26.]

[2] [Fenn gives *endowed*.]

[3] This is written on the back of the paper containing the original sermon.

[4] [Under-naming, *i. e.*, appointing.]

miseritis peccata, remittuntur eis, et quorum retinueritis retenta sunt, &c." (*John*, xx. 22, 23); he strengthened them also by his doctrine, when he said, "Petite et accipietis; si quid petieritis patrem in nomine meo, dabit vobis." (*John*, xvi. 23, 24.) How that ye should pray to God and ask, I taught you on Easter day; therefore ye shall pray God by good working, right full labouring, and in good deeds persevering.

Friends, ye ought for to ask of God that your joy may be a full joy and perfect; we may never have a full joy in this world, whereas ever among followeth heaviness. A man joyeth sometimes in gold and silver, and in great substance of earthly goods, in beauty of women; but this joy is not perfect, but this joy is not stable, but it is mutable as a shadow; for he that thus joyeth in the beauty of his wife, it may fortune to-morrow he shall follow her to church upon a bier; but if ye will know what is a full and a very joy, truly forgiveness of sin, and everlasting bliss, whereas is never sickness, hunger, nor thirst, nor no manner of disease, but all wealth, joy, and prosperity, &c. There be three manner of joys, the one void, another half full, the third is a full joy; the first is plenty of worldly goods; the second is ghostly grace; the third is everlasting bliss. The first joy, that is, affluence of temporal goods, is called a vain joy, for if a man were set at a board with delicate meats and drinks, and he saw a cauldron boiling afore him with pykke (*pitch*) and brimstone, in the which he should be thrown naked as soon as he had dined, for [*though*] he should joy much in his deliciose (*delicious*) meats, it should be but a vain joy. Right so doth the joy of a covetous man, if he see what pain his soul shall suffer in hell, for the miskeeping and getting of his goods, he should not joy in his treasure, ut in libro Decalogorum, "Quidam homo dives, &c."

Semiplenum gaudium est quando quis in presenti gaudet et tunc cogitans de futuris dolet; ut in quodam libro Græco, &c., "Quidam Rex Græciæ, &c.," here ye may see but half a joy; who should joy in this world if he remembered him of the pains of the other world? "Non glorietur fortis in fortitudine suâ, nec sapiens in sapientiâ suâ, nec dives in divitiis suis," (*Jer.* ix. 23); de quibus dicitur, qui confidunt in multitudine divitiarum suarum, quasi oves in inferno positi sunt (*Psalm* xlix. 6, 14), "Qui gloriantur, in Domino glorientur" (*Jer.* ix. 24); therefore let us joy in hope of everlasting joy and bliss.

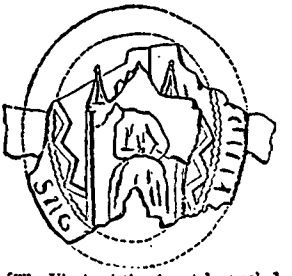
Gaudete quia nomina vestra scripta sunt in cælo, ut gaudium vestrum sit plenum. (*Luc.* x. 20.)

A full joy is in heaven.

Et in hoc apparet, quod magnum gaudium est in cælo, quoniam ibi est gaudium quod, "oculos non vidit, nec auris audivit, et in cor hominis non ascendit, quæ Deus præparavit diligentibus," (1 *Cor.* ii. 9); et ideo Fratres, variis linguis loquens (*precor*), ut gaudium vestrum sit plenum, vel, habeatis gaudium sempiternum.

LETTER CXLVIII.—(XCIX. vol. iii. p. 399.)

We see here that the Abbot of Langley desires to be excused attending in London as one of the executors of Sir John Fastolf; we learn, moreover, that Sir John himself desired particularly that the whole execution of his will should rest with J. Paston and Thomas Howes. Master John Stokes was a doctor of laws, a civilian, and an officer of the Bishop's Court. Nicholas occurs Abbot of Langley in 1428 and in 1463; he must therefore have been at this time an old man. This abbey was founded by Sir Robert Fitz Roger, Helke, or de Clavering, in 1198, 10 R. I. It was an abbey of considerable possessions, and became the burial-place of a great number of persons of rank and fortune. The seal of the abbey fastens the letter: it is an oval one on red wax, but though imperfect, I have delineated it.



[The Virgin sitting in a tabernacle.]

To the right worshipful Sir, Master John Stokes.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, and forasmuch as it is informed me that it was appointed that all the executors of the worshipful knight Sir John Fastolf, whose soul God assoil! should be at London as on Monday next coming, of which executors I am named for one, as I understand; wherefore inasmuch as ye be ordinary and one of the same executors, I pray you tender my labour without my coming, by your discretion, might be more profit to the dead,[1] for I conceive it should be but charge to the dead and little available, considering that John Paston, Esq., and Thomas Howes, parson of Blofield, shall come up at this time, which were the persons above all others that the said Sir John Fastolf put in his most singular love and trust, and would they should have the keeping and disposition of his goods, as well in his life as after his decease, to dispose for the weal of his soul; and that none other named his executors, but only they twain, should have any keeping or disposing of any part of his goods during their lives; and that all other named executors should support them, and give them to the said John Paston and Thomas Howes their good advice in performing of his desire in that behalf; wherefore that it liketh you in anything ye desire me to do in this cause or matter, to give your faith and credence to the said John Paston and Thomas Howes, and so desired me the said knight faithfully to do, that knoweth God, whom I beseech preserve you from all adversity. Written in the abbey of Langley, the 8th day of the month of May, the year of our Lord 1460.

Your priest,

THE ABBOT OF LANGLEY.

Abbey of Langley,
Thursday, 8th of May,
1460. 38 H. VI.

LETTER CXLIX.—(C. vol. iii. p. 401.)

We have here an application from the Prior of Bromholm to the queen for a gift of some timber from off the lands belonging to the Duchy of Lancaster, of which there are many in the county of Norfolk. The petitioner seems modest in his request, asking only for eight beams, each to be thirty-three feet long, from which circumstance the size of the dormitory can be nearly ascertained. John Titteshale was prior of Bromholm from 1460 for about twenty years. This letter must have been written therefore either on the 14th of October, 1460, or on the same day in 1465, as Edward IV. married in that year, and J. Paston died in May, 1466. If it was written in the former year, the request must have been to Queen Margaret; if in the latter, to Elizabeth, the queen of Edward IV.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful master, I recommend me unto you, desiring to know of your welfare and prosperity, which Jesu maintain and increase to his pleasure after your heart's desire,

[1] [This sentence is obscure, but we think it means—that he is willing to assist ("tender my labour") without going to London, leaving the inside of his assistance to the discretion of the other executors.]

thanking you ever of your good mastership to me showed at all times without desert on my behalf, praying you and heartily beseeching of your good continuance. Please it your mastership forasmuch as it (*is*) moved unto the my good masters the counsel of the Duchy of Lancaster, that they be well willing to make labour unto my sovereign lady the queen of your good instance for certain timber toward my dortour (*dormitory*) at Bromholm, in which mine especial desire is to have eight principal beams, every one in length eleven yards. I am not expert in making of any supplication, beseeching your mastership to take it upon you to do it make after your advice, alleged all poverty as your worshipful discretion can much better than I can inform, and I remit all to your wisdom, ever beseeching you to call this matter to your remembrance. No more at this time, but the Holy Trinity mote (*please*)[1] have you in his governance, and send you long life to endure to his pleasure. Written the 14th day of October.

Your priest and chaplain,

JOHN, Prior of Bromholm.

14th of October, 1460, 39 H. VI.,
or 1465, 5 E. IV.

LETTER CL.—(LII. vol. i. p. 203.)

Clement Paston appears to have written this letter to his brother, to induce him to show himself zealous for the York party, who had now possession of London and the king; and to induce him to do it with the greater readiness, informs him that the Lancastrian army, led on by the queen, had leave to pillage the south, and take away any man's property: this is a true, though terrible, picture of a kingdom harassed by civil commotions!

To his right worshipful brother, John Paston.

RIGHT reverend[2] and worshipful brother, I recommend (*me*) to you, certifying you your letter was delivered me the 23d day of January about the noon season, and Richard Calle rode in the morning, and therefore I broke your letter, if (*lest*) there were any after matter; and I did (*ordered*) Christopher Hauswan (*to*) go to my Lord of Canterbury[3] to tell him as your letter rehearsed; and my lord said he had spoken with your man thereof the day before, and if the Bishop of Norwich[4] would not do so much for him, he is the less beholden to him; notwithstanding, he said he would save you harmless against John Young; but, and ye do well, remember this lord have many matters to think on, and if it be forgotten the harm is yours; also if the word [*q. world*?] turn John Young will not do at his prayer.

And my Lord Fitzwalter[5] is ridden northwards, and it is said, in my Lord of Canterbury's house, that he hath taken 200 of Andrew Trollop's[6] men. And as for Colt, and Sir James Strangwyse, and Sir Thomas Pykering, they be taken or else dead: the common voice is that they be dead.

Hopton and Hastings be with the Earl of March, and were not at the field.

What word that ever he have from my lords that be here, it is well done and best for you to see that the country be always ready to come, both footmen and horsemen, when they be sent for; for I have heard said the farther lords will be here sooner than men ween, I have heard said ere three weeks to an end; and also that ye should come with more men and cleanlier arrayed than any other man of your country should; for it lieth more upon your worship and toucheth you more near than other men of that country, and also ye be more had in favour with my lords here. In this country every man is well

[1] Not *please*, but *might*. The sentence means, "but may the Holy Trinity," &c.

[2] [Reverend is here not used in its now usual acceptation, but in that of revered, honoured—as we have already noticed, and in which sense it frequently occurs.]

[3] Thomas Bourchier.

[4] Walter Hart, [or Lyhart] Bishop of Norwich.

[5] This must have been some action, after the battle of Wakefield, in which the queen's party was beaten.

[6] Andrew Trollop was killed at the battle of Towton, on the 29th March, 1461, fighting for the House of Lancaster.

willing to go with my lords here, and I hope God shall help them, for the people in the north rob and steal, and be appointed[1] to pill (*pillage*) all this country, and give away men's goods and livelyhoods in all the south country, and that will ask a mischief. My lords that be here have as much as they may do to keep down all this country, more than four or five shires, for they would be up on the men in the north, for it is for the weal of all the south. I pray you recommend me to my mother, and that I prayed her of her blessing; I pray you excuse me to her that I write her no letter, for this was enough to do. I dare not pray you to recommend me to my sister your wife, and the messenger I trow be so wise he can not do it. Ye must pay him for his labour, for he tarried all night in this town for this letter.

Written the 23d day of January in haste, when I was not well at ease. God have (*you*) in his keeping.

By CLEMENT PASTON,
Your Brother.

23d January, 1460. 39 H. VI.

[The seals of the Pastons were usually one or more fleur de lis, but on this letter Clement Paston gives an escalop shell.]

LETTER CLI.—(CI. vol. iii. p. 405.)

In these days few persons died without bequeathing something to the church, to be distributed at the pleasure of their executors. This trust seems to have been reposed in J. Paston by several, though it appears he was slow in disposing of the money, as his father had been dead now above fifteen years, and a part of his goods so bequeathed remained still in his hands; as appears by this letter.

Amicabili magistro nostro, Johanni Paston, Armigero.

FULL reverend and worshipful, after all due reverence and recommendation, your poor priest beseecheth humbly it please your good mastership to understand by this simple bill, that on the Friday next after the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul last past, I was at your place at Caister to have told you what answer I had of Sir Thomas Howes, parson of Blofield, and inasmuch as ye were not at home, I told it to my mistress your wife, and God thank her of her gentleness, she made me great cheer; and moreover advised me to send you a bill thereof to London. This was his answer, when I had talked to him as I could, in like wise as ye adverted[2] me to do; he answered again in these words, "Near is my kirtle, but nearer is my smock;" and this was his meaning, that ye should be more near us, and tender to us, than he, and that ye should rather owe us good will than he, and that we should labour rather to your mastership than to him; and also that good that he had to dispose he had beset it, and of parcell, he told me, he had delivered the Abbot of Langley, fourscore pounds, whereof, as he said to me, ye grudged and were in manner displeased, notwithstanding ye said again to him ye should give as much; and he said to me ye named the places where; and therefore he advised me to labour effectually to your good mastership, for ye might help us well; for he said ye had much good of the dead to dispose, what of your father, God bless that soul! what of Berney, and what now of his good master Fastolf. And as for Sir John Fastolf, on whose soul Jesu have mercy! he said to me, ye had of his good four, four, and four more than he, in these same terms, without any sum.

And after all other talkings he told me he should be with you at London hastily, and that he would say good word to you to relieve our poor place; Sir, I beseech, be thee not displeased, for truly and (*if*) I wist to have your heavy mastership therefore, I had lever (*rather*) it had been unthought. And [*it*] *is* this, that when Sir Thomas Howes and ye be soon at London we might be so in your good grace that our place might be brother

[1] The queen had informed her northern army that they should plunder the country south of Trent.

[2] The original is "au'ted." We think for advertised, or avertyzed.]

to Langley, for that should glad us more than the commission that the Bishop of Norwich[1] sent us on Thursday last past to gather the dymes (*tenths*), for that is a shrewd labour for us, a great cost and a shrewd jeopardy.

Evermore that high and mighty celestial prince preserve you body and soul, and send you comfort of the Holy Ghost well to perform all your heart's desire in all your matters to his pleasance and your worship, and solace to all your well-willers. Written at Bromholm on the Saturday next after the feast of the conversion of Saint Paul last past.

From your priest and beadsman,
JOHN, prior of Bromholm.[2]

Bromholm,
Saturday, 31 January,
1469. 39 H. VI.

LETTER CLII.—(CII. vol. iii. p. 409.)

In former times a person's signet or seal was of the utmost consequence, and we find by this letter that J. Paston had made immediate inquiries after his as soon as he missed it. I cannot in this place forbear mentioning the promiscuous and unauthorised use of arms, which, to the disgrace of the laws of honour, now so generally prevails, since it has been supposed that the college of arms is not empowered to compel payment by attaching the body of goods of the offender for any fine set by the Court of Honour upon those persons who have assumed arms, and bear them without a proper grant or descent from the original grantee. When county visitations were permitted, and the king of arms of the province and heralds went their progresses, distinctions of family descents and family arms were recorded and kept up, and the heirs of gentlemen's families for a small fee were enabled to join themselves to their parent stock, by attending with their vouchers at the time and place appointed, of which they were informed by a public summons from the sheriffs of their respective counties. It may be said, that in a free government like ours every man ought to have a right to ornament his carriage, his plate, or the wax on his letters, with any device most agreeable to himself without being accountable to any one. This being allowed, what will follow? That every one may assume a name, or even a title, or may decorate himself with the insignia of any of the honourable orders. But would not such an one be called a fool or a madman? He certainly would. I have often thought that government might fairly avail itself of the present prevailing taste for arms-bearing, by compelling every person of what rank or degree soever to take out an annual licence or certificate, for which a stated sum according to his rank or degree should be paid for the liberty of bearing or displaying any arms, crest, or device, on his banners, carriages, plate, seals, &c. &c. This would be a tax which could not effect the poor, nor in reality any one who did not wish to put himself in the rank of a gentleman. [This suggestion of Fenn's is curious as being probably the origin of a tax not long afterwards imposed, and now in existence.]

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; praying you to weet that I have received your letter this day that ye sent me by Yelverton's man. As for your signet, I found it upon your board the same day that ye went hence, and I send it you by Richard Heberd, bringer hereof; as for your errands that ye wrote to me for, Richard Charles is out about your errands about Gresham, and for his own matters also, and I suppose, he cometh not home till it be Tuesday or Wednesday next coming, and as soon as he cometh home he shall go about your errands that ye wrote to me for.

I sent you a letter written on Tuesday last past, which, as I suppose, Roger Ormsby delivered you. I took it to Alson Partridge; she rode with Clippesby's wife to London.

I pray you if ye have another son that ye will let it be named Harry,[3] in remembrance of your brother Harry; also I pray you that ye would send me dates and cinnamon as hastily as ye may. I have spoken with John Damme of that ye bade me say to him to say to Thomas Note, and he says he was well paid that ye said and thought therein, as ye did: nerles (*nevertheless*) I bade him that he should say to the said Thomas therein,

[1] Walter Hart [or Lyhart] became Bishop of Norwich in 1446, and died in 1472.

[2] This priory was founded by William de Glanville, in the reign of Henry I., and in the year 1113.

[3] On the back of the original letter in an ancient hand is written "It appere by this lrē yt Justice Paston had a sonne named Herry, who dyed yonge."

as it were of himself, without your advice or any others; and he said he should so, and that it should be purveyed for this next week at the furthest. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich in haste the Friday next before Candlemas day. *By your groaning wife,*[1]

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Friday, 1st February,
1460. 39 H. VI.

LETTER CLIII.—(CIII. vol. iii. p. 413.)

This letter has no direction, and lest it should be opened, the paper which fastens the seal is, along the edge, marked with lines by a pen which communicate with the latter, by which means the receiver might easily have discovered any attempts to have opened it, as the lines would not then have exactly coincided again. On the back of it, but in a later hand, is written "A lrē to J. Paston, ar. from his wife." I should think that this letter was written just before the important crisis that finished Henry's reign and placed Edward on the throne; if so, it was written on the 1st of March, 1460-1, at a time when the friends of Henry might be elated at the approach of the queen with her army, which had been lately victorious at St. Alban's, not foreseeing that in a few days the Duke of York would become their sovereign. Giles Saint Loe was high sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk in 1458. N.B. To this letter the initial letter of her Christian name is only affixed. Seal, a fleur de lys. See engraving at end of the letter, wherein the marks drawn by a pen to show if it had been opened, are expressed. The square lines represent the paper folded over the letter on which the seal is impressed; the angular ones show the connecting lines from that paper to the paper on which the letter is written.

A letter to John Paston, Esq., from his wife.

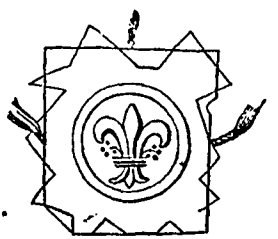
PLEASE it you to weet that it is let me weet by one that oweth you good will, that there is laid a wait upon you in this country if ye come here at large, to bring you to the presence of such a lord in the north as shall not be for your ease, but to jeopardy of your life, or great and importable loss of your goods; and he that hath taken upon him this enterprise now, was under-sheriff to Giles Saintlowe; he hath great favour hereto by the means of the son of William Baxter that lieth buried in the Grey Friars; and as it is reported the said son hath given great silver to the lords in the north to bring the matter about, and now he and all his old fellowship put out their fins, and are right flygge (*ripe*) and merry, hoping all thing is and shall be as they will have it; also it is told me that the father of the bastard in this country said that now should this shire be made sure for him and his heirs, and for the Baxter's heirs also, whereby I conceive they think that they have none enemy but you, &c.

Wherefore like it you to be the more wary of your guiding for your person's safe-guard, and also that ye be not too hasty to come into this country till ye hear the world (*is*) more sure. I trow the bearer of this shall tell more by mouth as he shall be informed of the rule in this country. God have you in his keeping. Written in haste, the second Sunday of Lent, by candlelight at even.

By yours, &c.

MARGARET PASTON.

1st March, 1460-1.
39 H. VI.



[1] The conclusion of this letter is particular, and shows that the writer was very near her time of lying-in: it was written I believe about 1460.

LETTER CLIV.—(LIII. vol. i. p. 209.)

This letter must have been written in the reign of Henry VI., but in what year I cannot say: it contains a curious historical anecdote, greatly to the honour of the commander of the ships. [It is certainly very curious, if true; but we believe it must be greatly exaggerated. So remarkable an event could not have passed unnoticed by historians, none of whom even allude to it, though they mention the far less important capture of a few Spanish or Hans-town vessels by the Earl of Warwick about the same time, *i. e.* the latter end of the reign of Henry VI.]

To my reverend master, Thomas Daniel, Esquire[1] *for the king's body,*[2] *be this letter delivered in haste.*

MOST reverend master, I recommend me unto your gracious mastership, ever desiring to hear of your worshipful estate; the which Almighty God maintain it, and increase it unto his pleasance.

Pleasing you to know of my welfare, and of all your men, at the making of this letter, we were in good health of body, aye[3] blessed be God.

Moreover, master, I send you word by Rawly Pickering of all matters, the which I beseech you give him credence, as he will inform you of all, so sure I beseech you in the reverence of God that ye will inform our sovereign lord the king of all matters that I send you in this letter; like as I have sent a letter to my Lord Chancellor, and to all my lords, by the said Pickering: the which letter I beseech you that ye take and deliver to my lord, and all my lords, by your own hands, and let the said Pickering declare all things as he hath seen and known.

First, I send you word that when we went to sea, we took two ships of Brest coming out of Flanders; and *then* after, there is made a great arming in Britayne to meet with me and my fellowship, that is to say, the great ship of Brest, the great ship of Morlaix, the great ship of Vannes, with other eight ships, barges, and balingers to the number of 3000 men, and so we lay on the sea to meet with them.

And then we met with a flote (*fleet*) of an hundred great ships of Prusse [*Prusia*], Lubeck, Campe, Rostock, Holland, Zealand, and Flanders,[4] betwixt Guernsey and Portland; and there I came aboard the admiral, and bade them strike in the king's name of England, and they bade me skite in the king's name of England; and then I and my fellowship said but (*unless*) he will strike down the sail, that I will oversail them by the grace of God, and God will send me wind and weather; and they bade me do my worst, because I had so few ships, and so small that they scorned me.

And as God would, on Friday last was, we had a good wind; and then we armed us to the number of 2000 men in my fellowship, and made us ready for to oversail them; and then they launched a boat, and set up a standard of truce, and came and spoke with me, and there they were yielded all the hundred ships to go with me into what port that me list and my fellows; but they fought with me the day before, and shot at us a 1000 guns, and quarrels out of number, and have slain many of my fellowship, and maimed also.

Wherefore methinketh that they have forfeited both ships and goods at our sovereign lord the king's will.

Beseeching you that ye do your part in this matter, for this I have written to my Lord Chancellor, and all my lords of the king's council; and so I have brought them, all the hundred ships, within Wight (*the Isle of Wight*), in spite of them all.

And ye might get leave of our sovereign lord the king to come hither, it shall turn you to great worship and profit, to help make our appointment in the king's name, for ye saw never such a sight of ships taken into England this hundred winters; for we lie armed night and day to keep them in, to the time that we have tidings of our sovereign and his council; for truly they have done harm to me, and to my fellowship, and to your ships, more than 2000*l.*[5] worth (*of*) harm.

[1] Thomas Daniel, Esq. [See Letter cxxxix.]

[2] An esquire of the king's body was an officer of great trust, lodged near, and during the night all messages, &c. were delivered by him in person to the king.

[3] [*Aye* was frequently written *I*, as it is here in the original. Fenn omits it in the translation.]

[4] These were great marts for trade.

[5] I cannot tell whether this, in the original letter, is 2000*l.* or 3000*l.*

And therefore I am advised, and all my fellowship, to drown[1] them and slay them, without that we have tidings from our sovereign the king and his council; and therefore in the reverence of God come ye yourself, and ye shall have a great avail and worship for your coming to see a such sight, for I dare well say, that I have here at this time all the chief ships of Dutchland, Holland, Zealand, and Flanders, and now it were time for to treat for a final peace as for these parts.

I write no more to you at this time, but Almighty Jesu have you in his keeping.

I write in haste within Wight, on Sunday at night after the Ascension of our Lord.

By your own servant,

ROBERT WENYNGTON.

Isle of Wight, Sunday, H. VI.

LETTER CLV.—(CIV. vol. iii. p. 415.)

On the back of this letter, but in a later hand, is the following memorandum, "Robtus Debenham ar' hūit exit. Gilbt'm Debenham mil. fil. suū, ipso pat. viven." We have here a curious and at that time a common instance of forcible entry, and keeping possession by force, from which, and many other similar accounts contained in these letters, we see the propriety of buildings of that age being strengthened by towers, moats, and draw-bridges, as defences against those forcible invasions of private property. William Naunton, the writer of this letter, was of the very ancient and worshipful family of Naunton, at this time situated at Alderton in Suffolk. His descendants afterwards removed to Letheringham in the same county, where they possessed a considerable property, and resided in a venerable mansion, formerly the abbey. The last male possessor of this estate left it by will to his heir at law: the consequence of which has been that pretended heirs have been continually starting up, and disputing the right of the person in possession to the detriment of the estate, and to the utter destruction of the church and chancel, now become a ruinous mass from neglect, and in which were many curious, expensive, and valuable monuments of this, the Wingfields and other allied families; the windows were also adorned with exceedingly elegant paintings on the glass, of Scripture history, effigies, and armorial bearings, all of which have been within these very few years entirely demolished! The monuments, however, are most of them preserved by the accurate pencil of Mr. Johnson, of Woodbridge, at the expense of my friend Craven Ord, Esq. This writer little thought, whilst he was lamenting the proceedings at Cotton-hall to J. Paston, that in after-ages his descendants would be despoiling a litigated property in somewhat a similar manner. [This note of Fenn's was published in 1789.]

To my Master Paston, the elder, be this letter delivered in hast.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to your good mastership the cause why I write; I let you have knowledge of the men that be in Cotton-hall (*in Suffolk*), how they be strangely disposed against you, for, as I hear say, they make revel there, they melt lead, and break down your bridge, and make that no man go into *(the)* place but on a ladder, and make them as strong as they can against you by the supportation of Jenney, and Debenham, and his son, for they say there that Jenney hath sold the livelihood unto Debenham, and that his son the knight shall dwell there, and therefore they have warned a court against Monday, and now they have advised to keep it on Saturday before Monday; what they mean thereby I wot never; but as for the fellowship in the place that is there now, and have been there all this week, there is no man of substance as we hear, and there have been but seven or eight all this week, but there will be a great fellowship this night or to-morrow upon Saturday, for then they will keep the court; and as for Edward Dale he dare not abide well at home, they threaten him so, because he will send them no vytaly (*victuals*), and as for myself Edward Dale dare not let me well be there for taking in suspicion. And as for the tenants, they be well disposed, except one or two, so that ye will support them in haste, for they may not keep their cattle off the ground longer, and specially they desire to have your own presence, and they would be of great comfort.

No more I write to you, but the Holy Ghost have you in keeping. Written on the Friday after my departing.

By your servant,

WILLIAM NAUNTON.

Friday, ... 14 . . .
Date uncertain.

[1] It seems contrary to all rules of war or humanity to drown or slay prisoners of war, after they have surrendered.

LETTER. CLVI.—(CV. vol. iii. p. 419.)

We have here a most curious letter from a brother of the Order of the Temple of Syon to J. Paston, earnestly persuading him to a temporary residence amongst them, according to the rules of the order, and dissuading him from improper alms-giving to the hurt of his private affairs. The choosing of a place to do his penance in during Advent, reminds us of the establishment for the secret house of the Earl of Northumberland, in the reign of Henry the VIIIth, who at certain seasons of the year retired from his principal mansion to some small retreat, where he lived privately, and most probably performed offices of devotion and charity, as atonements for his sins of omission and commission. See the 'Northumberland Book,' p. 361, and notes at p. 442. We may from this letter suppose that persons of inferior rank at certain times likewise left their houses, and retired for the same purposes of praying and alms-doing, and that the season of Advent was the time set apart by J. Paston for those religious duties. [From all other parts of the correspondence, however, notwithstanding the writers "p'fite knowlich of yor freell and natrall disposiseon," J. Paston would seem to have been among the last of men who ruin themselves through their liberality. The threat of a sharp and hasty process in case of disobedience, seems to confirm the subsequent passage, where he is invited to come and be jocund, "as ze sholde be yn the place of yor p'fession amounggis yor holy bryy'yn," that Paston was himself professed of the order, which we think however is hardly probable.]

. . To my right worshipful master and brother, John Paston, this letter be taken.

Right worshipful and reverent master and brother, with all my service I recommend me unto you. Please it unto your great wisdom to have in your discreet remembrance the strait order on which we be professed, and on which ye are bounden to keep your residence, and specially on this time of Christmas amongst your confreres of this holy order, the Temple of Syon; for unless that ye keep duly the points of your holy religion, our Master Thomas Babyngton, master and sovereign of our order, by the assent of his brethren, be advised to award against you right sharp and hasty process to do call you to do your observance, and to obey the points of your religion, which were unto me great heaviness. Wherefore I, as he that hath most greatest cause, and is most bounden unto your great gentleness, and also whom nature and kin most specially before every of all our brethren binden me to owe and will you good will and true heart, considering the great time of penance that ye have been in from soon upon Michaelmas hitherto, that is to say in relieving and sustenance of your even Cristen,[1] and also in the charitable and meritory (*meritorious*) deed of alms-doing, that is to say, in plenteous and liberal gifts, which is more preciouser than gold or silver, which hath not been at all times to your great ease, neither heart's pleasaunce (*pleasure*), but rather to your great disease and intolerable pain, and where[2] God's law and man's law accord that it shall not be lawful to none earthly man to be so liberal and plenteous of that that God sendeth him, that he should so dispose it so that he should nought have to live by; and forasmuch as I have perfect knowledge of your freell (*free will*) and natural disposition so set unto them that be needy and hungry, that of yourself ye have no might, neither power, to abstain and rule yourself, but all so long as God sendeth and giveth you whereof to dispose and help your even Cristen, ye must needs dispose it forth amongst your even Cristen, I counsel you that in all so hasty and goodly time as ye can, to come unto your holy brethren that be of this devout and close conversation,[3] to the intent that ye might be advertised and learned by them the good rule and measure that ye ought and should have in the disposition and dealing of your alms.

And also sithen (*since*) ye have chosen you a place in this season of Advent, in which ye have had a reasonable leisure and space to do your penance in, which draweth fast to an end, which hath been a convenient place as for the season of the year, and now it draweth fast unto Christmas, on which time every true Christian man should be merry, jocund, and glad; and sithen there is no place which by likelihood of reason ye should find in your heart to be so glad and jocund in, as ye should

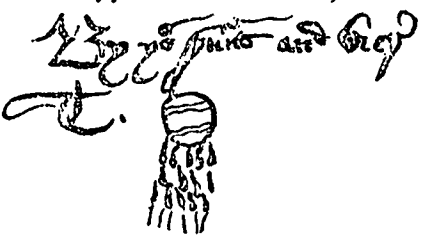
1 Even Cristen. I wish for an explanation of this. [*Even* is *equal* or *fellow*. Fellow Christians.]

2 [Whereas.]

3 [Original, "cõversaion," Fenn translates "counsel."]

be in the place of your profession amongst your holy brethren, in which place in this season of the year it is accustomed to be (*have*) all manner of disport,[1] like as it is not unknown to your wise discretion; wherefore as my simple reason leadeth me, your great discretion should rule you, that ye should approach nigh the place of your holy religion in all so hasty time as ye could or might, of whose coming all your said brethren would be glad and fain (*pleased*), and in especial I your servant and brother, like as I am most singular bounden to the increase of your prosperity and welfare, which I shall ever desire with God's mercy, which have you under his blessed and favourable protection. Written in the Temple of Syon, the 3d day of December, in great haste.

By your servant and brother, T.[2]



Temple of Syon, 3rd December,
Date uncertain.

LETTER CLVII.—(CVI. vol. iii. p. 425.)

We have in this letter an instance of force used in entering into possession of manors and estates; a very common method of proceeding in those violent and unsettled times.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, praying you to weet that it was told me this week that there is a fair place to sell in St. Laurence's parish, and standeth near the church, and by the water-side, the which place Topps hath to sell, Pyte Alyster bought it of Topps, and now for default of payment Topps hath entered again therein, and shall sell it in haste as it is told me; the said Lyster dwelleth therein at this time, but he shall out, for he is held right a poor man;[3] I suppose if ye like to buy it, when ye come home ye shall mow (*be able to*) have it of Topps as good cheap or better than another should.

As for tidings we have none good in this country; I pray God send us good: it was told me that Richard Southwell hath entered in the manor of (*Holm*) Hale, the which is the Lady Boys's,[4] and keepeth it with strength with such another fellowship as hath been at Brayston, and wasteth and despoileth all that there is; and the Lady Boys, as it is told me, is to London to complain to the king and to the lords thereof; it seemeth it was not for nought that he held with Charles and his fellowship.

I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to speak to James Gloys to buy the *unguentum album* that I spake to him for; and that ye will remember your fair daughter's girdle.

I hope ye shall be at home so soon that I will write no more tidings to you. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all that ye will speed well in. Written at Norwich on the Ascension day.

Yours,
MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, May,
H. VI. Date uncertain.

[1] The jovial manner of living at Christmas in these societies is here likewise pointed out, and makes us wish we could have taken a look at their pastimes, feasts, &c.

[2] The writer of this singular letter was from his own account a relation of J. Paston, and his signature is like what in heraldry often represents a fountain; it is therefore possible that his name might be Thomas Fountaine, as a family of that name resided at Salle in the county of Norfolk, about the time that this letter was written.

[3] [We do not think Margaret Paston intends to express anything so atrocious here as that Pyte "shall out" unjustly because he is a poor man, but only that being "rygth apore man," he will not be able to pay, and must relinquish his bargain.]

[4] Sibilla, daughter and heir of Sir Robt. Ylley, and widow of Sir Roger Boys, knt.: shew as alive after 1450.

LETTER CLVIII.—(CVII. vol. iii. p. 427.)

We have here an account of a low amour; but the reason why I have given this letter is to show that E. Paston's mother was governed by some one in the house, who took upon him to direct as he pleased, and for that reason a party seemed to be forming against him by her children. The person here meant was, I believe, Gloys, a priest, who resided in the house, and was a favourite with Agnes Paston. As a mistress of a family, she was certainly doing her duty in discouraging improper behaviour in her servants; but then, as now, we find it would be sometimes prudent to overlook improprieties in a domestic, who was in other respects a valuable one. [Particularly when, as here, the facts are not very indubitably proved, and are denied.]

To John Paston, Esq.

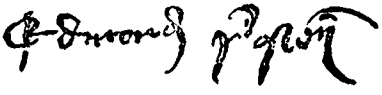
SIR, I recommend me to you; please it you to weet that my mother hath caused me to put Gregory out of my service, as God help I write to you the very cause why; it happened him to have a knave's lust, in plain terms, to lie with a queen, and so did in the Coning Close; it fortuned him to be espied by two ploughmen of my mother's, which were as fain (*desirous*) as he of that matter, and desired him to have part, and as company required said not nay, insomuch that the ploughmen had her all night in their stable, and Gregory was clear delivered of her, and as he swears had not ado with her within my mother's place; notwithstanding my mother thinks that he was (*the*) ground of that matter, wherefore there is no remedy but he must avoid; and insomuch that at the last time that ye were here (*ye*) desired him of me if that he should depart from me, I send you the very cause of his departing, as my mother saith, but I am in certain the contrary is true; it is no more but that he cannot please all parties; but that gentleman is his word's lord, he hath said that he would lift them whom that him please, and as it showed well he lifted one fourteen miles in a morning, and now he hath been causer of his lift, I wot not how far but if (*unless*) that ye be his better master; but and we among us give not him a lift, I pray God that we never thrive; and that is his intent, I trow, to bring us to; wherefore I require you, if that it please you to have him, that ye will be the better master to him for my sake, for I am he that is as sorry to depart from him as any man alive from his servant, and by my truth, as farforth as I know, he is as true as any alive.

I trust my fortune shall be better than ever to live thus here; but if I were hencewards I assure you I would not change for none that I know; he is profitable on divers things as ye know well.

There has been a great break (*breach*) betwixt Calle and me, as I shall inform you at my coming, which shall be on Wednesday next by the grace of God, who preserve you.

Written at Mauteby on Whitsun eve.

EDMOND PASTON.



Mauteby,
Whitsun Eve.

LETTER CLIX.—(CVIII. vol. iii. p. 431.)

I have given this letter, as it ascertains the public manner by which the ships were victualled, and shows us that it was done by a kind of voluntary subscription, in every town throughout the hundreds, of money and corn, though what proportion the corn bore to the money collected does not appear from this account.

To my master, John Paston.

PLEASETH your mastership to weet, that I was at Seole, and spake with Arblaster and John Sadler, and with other good yeomen of the country, to understand how they were guided for the victualling of the barge of Yarmouth; and I understand by them that their hundred have paid, nevertheless it is but little, there was gathered in that hundred eighteen shillings and certain corn; and (*in*) some other hundred six marks (4*l.*) and corn; and so they have paid in, all the hundreds and towns here about, that is to say, East

Flegg and West Flegg, and up to Blofield, Tunstead, and up to Stalman. I understand by the commission that Debenham hath, it is more large than Master John's, as ye shall understand, whereof I send you a copy, which causeth me that I labour no farther therein, notwithstanding your mastership shall have knowledge what every hundred gives, and Yarmouth both.

Written at Winterton, the morrow after I departed from your mastership.

Your poor beadsman,

RICHARD CALLE.[1]

Winterton.

LETTER CLX.—(CIX. vol. iii. p. 433.)

It appears by this copy of a letter (for so it is styled at the top of the paper) that the candidates were not always present on the day of election. The under-sheriff here meant to do his duty, and to make his return after the sufficient, that is, according to the greatest number of votes, though he at the same time hints, that it is not entirely as he shall please, but as the high-sheriff shall direct. [The high-sheriff, as the legal returning officer, would of course decide who had the majority of votes, or, as is likely here, show of hands, according to his own opinion, and not on that of his deputy.]

The copy of a letter sent to John Paston, by the under-sheriff of Norfolk.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you, &c. And, Sir, as for the election of the knights of the shire here in Norfolk, in good faith here hath been much to do, nevertheless to let you have knowledge of the demeaning, my Master Berney, my Master Grey, and ye had greatest voice, and I purpose me, as I will answer God, to return the due election, that is after the sufficient you and Master Grey, nevertheless I have a master. Written at Hetherset, the Thursday next before Midsummer.

By

WILLIAM PRYCE.

Hetherset,
Thursday, June.

LETTER CLXI.—(CX. vol. iii. p. 433.)

It appears from what is said in this letter, that Perse was committed as one who had been a partisan in the civil wars of the times, though of which party it does not appear; nor is it material, as my reason for giving the letter is to show the treatment of prisoners.

To my right worshipful Sir Robert Rokesby.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, beseeching you of your good mastership that ye will vouchsafe to speak to Richard Kowven, that he might bring me or send me the money that is between him and me in all the haste that he may, for in good faith I had never more need for to have help of my good as I have at this time, for God wot it stands right strange with me, for the false gaoler that keepeth me entreateth me worse than it were a dog, for I am fettered worse than ever I was, and manacled on the hands both day and night, for he is afraid of me for breaking away; he maketh false tales of me, through the means of a false quean that was tending to a Frenchman that is prisoner to my Lord Roos, and for because of that he bronde (*upbraideth*) me every day by John of Berney that is gone to the other lords, but I trust to God once to quit him his meed; and, Sir, I thank you mickle (*much*) of that ye have done for me or said, and Sir, I shall deserve it against you, by the grace of God, for in faith I am beholden to you more than to all men that ever I found since I came in prison.

No more to you at this time, but God have you in his keeping.

By your servant and beadsman,

PERSE.

This letter has neither place nor date mentioned.

[1] Richard Calle of Edinthorpe, he afterwards married Margery, daughter of John and Margaret Paston.

[Edward IV.]

From a painting on a board formerly preserved in the Manor House, Southwick, Northamptonshire.

EDWARD IV.—1460 TO 1483.

LETTER CLXII.—(I. vol. i. p. 217.)

This letter gives a very curious and authentic account of the bloody battle of Towton (a village about 10 miles S. W. from York), fought on Palm Sunday, the 29th of March, 1461; within a month after Edward's possessing himself of the crown, and upon the fate of which his future hopes of retaining it depended. The facts here related are those sent by the king himself to his mother Cecily Duchess of York, widow of Richard Duke of York, daughter to Ralph Nevile, Earl of Westmoreland.

To my master, John Paston, in haste.

PLEASE you to know and weet of such tidings as my Lady of York hath by a letter of credence under the sign-manual of our sovereign lord King Edward; which letter came unto our said lady this same day Eastern even[1] at xj o'clock, and was seen and read by me, William Paston.

First, our sovereign lord hath won the field; and upon the Monday next after Palm Sunday[2] he was received into York with great solemnity and processions. And the mayor and commons of the said city made their means to have grace by Lord Montagu[3] and Lord Berners,[4] which, before the king's coming into the said city, desired him of grace for the said city, which granted them grace.

On the king's part is slain Lord Fitzwalter,[5] and Lord Scroop[6] sore hurt; John Stafford[7] [*and*] Horne of Kent be dead, and Humphrey Stafford[7] (*and*) William Hastyngs[8] made knights, with others; Blount is knighted, &c.

On the contrary part, is dead Lord Clifford,[9] Lord Nevile,[10] Lord Welles,[11] Lord Willoughby,[12] Anthony Lord Scales,[13] Lord Harry,[14] and by supposition the Earl of Northumberland,[15] Andrew Trollop, with many others, gentle and commons, to the number of twenty thousand.

Item, King Harry, the queen, the prince, Duke of Somerset,[16] Duke of Exeter,[17] Lord

[1] Eastern eve was this year on the 4th of April.

[2] Palm Sunday fell on the 29th of March. This account therefore from the king did not arrive in London till six days after the battle.

[3] John Nevile, Lord Montagu, was, in 1464, created Earl of Northumberland, and, on his resignation of that title, in 1470, Marquis of Montagu; he fell in the battle of Barnet in 1471, fighting against King Edward.

[4] Sir John Bourchier, Lord Berners, in the battle of St. Alban's, in 1450, fought on the part of Henry VI.; but after that time he and his family espoused the cause of the Yorkists: he died in 1474.

[5] It does not appear from our baronages that there was at this time a Lord Fitzwalter; our historians however mention such a nobleman, as commanding at Ferry Bridge for Edward IV., where he was defeated and killed a few days before this battle; and this letter confirms the existence of such a title.

[6] John Lord Scroop, of Bolton, died in 1494.

[7] John Stafford and Humphrey Stafford were both of the family of the Duke of Buckingham.

[8] William Hastings was soon after created Lord Hastings, and in 1483 beheaded by the command of Richard III.

[9] John Lord Clifford, killed at Ferry Bridge, the day before the battle of Towton, was the man who basely stabbed Edmund Earl of Rutland, immediately after the battle of Wakefield, in December 1460.

[10] John Lord Nevile.

[11] Lionel Lord Welles.

[12] Richard Welles, a son of Lord Welles, in 1455 was summoned as Lord Willoughby in right of his wife, Joanna, heir of that great warrior Robert Lord Willoughby.

[13] Anthony Widville, Lord Scales, was not killed in this battle, but became afterwards Earl Rivers, and died in 1491. This nobleman and Lord Montagu must have been created lords immediately on the accession of Edward IV.

[14] Lord Harry:—query, Stafford?

[15] Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, jointly commanded with the Duke of Somerset, and was then slain, being about the age of 36 years.

[16] Henry Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, was taken prisoner at the battle of Hexham in 1464, and beheaded by order of Edward IV.

[17] Henry Holland, Duke of Exeter, took sanctuary at Westminster, after the battle of Barnet, in 1471; went hence privately abroad, where he lived in great poverty.

Roos[1] be fled into Scotland, and they be chased and followed, &c. We send no er [*earlier*][2] unto you because we had none certain till now; for unto this day London was as sorry city as might; and because Spordams had no certain tidings, we thought ye should take them a worth [*at their worth*][3] till more certain.

Item, Thorp Waterfield is yielded as Spordams can tell you.

And Jesu speed you; we pray you that this tidings my mother may know.

By your brother,
W. PASTON.
TH. PLAYTERS.

London,
Saturday, Easter Eve,
4th April, 1461. 1.E. IV.

On a piece of paper pinned to the above letter, is a list of the names of the noblemen and knights, and the number of soldiers slain at the above battle of Towton, as follow:—

Noblemen.

Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland.
Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire.[4]
William Beaumont, Viscount Beaumont.
John Clifford, Lord Clifford.
John Nevile, Lord Nevile.
Lord Dacre.[5]
Lord Henry Stafford, of Buckingham.
Lionel Welles, Lord Welles.
Anthony Rivers, Lord Scales.
Richard Welles, Lord Willoughby.
Sir Ralph Bigot, knight, Lord de Malley.

Knights.

Sir Ralph Grey.
Sir Richard Jeney.
Sir Harry Belingham.
Sir Andrew Trollop, with twenty-eight thousand,[6] numbered by the heralds.

LETTER CLXIII.—(II. vol. i. p. 223.)

From hence we learn some further particulars relative to the battle of Towton, and of the proceedings after it; particularly of the besieging of a place where Henry VI. was, and from which he might have been easily stolen away. This account differs from that given by our historians, who say that the king, &c. fled directly into Scotland. [There seems no authority for the fact. It is indeed reported as hearsay only; nor is there any place in Yorkshire with a name like "Coroumbr," or at least none such able to stand a siege.]

To my master, John Paston, Esq.

PLEASE your mastership to weet, that I have spoken with Essex in the matter that ye weet of, and find him by his talking well disposed; notwithstanding he will not fall to no conclusion to engross up the matter till the chief baron be come to London, and that he be made privy to the matter; which we look after this same second Saturday after Easter.

And as for Nottingham he is not yet coming to London.

Item, as for tidings, it is noised and told for truth of men of worship and others, that the Earl of Wiltshire is taken, Doctor Morton and Doctor Makerell, and be brought to the king at York. Mastr William[7] also spoke with a man that saw them. Item, Sir, I hear of Sir John Borceter[8] and Christopher Hanson that Harry the VIth is in a place in Yorkshire (*which*) is called Coroumber, such a name it hath, or much like. And there is siege laid about, and divers esquires of the Earl of Northumberland and (*have*) gathered them together a five or six thousand men, to byger (*fight*[9]) with the siege, that in the mean while Harry the Sixth might have have been stolen

---

[1] Thomas Lord Roos.

[2] [*Er* is evidently a contraction for *earlier*, but Fenn translates it *sooner*.]

[3] [Fenn translates, *as you would*.]

[4] Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, was taken and beheaded.

[5] Sir Richard Fynes was at this time Lord Dacre, but he was not killed in this battle.

[6] This number is less than that given by [some of] our historians.

[7] William Paston I believe is here meant.

[8] Sir John Bourchier, query?

[9] [*Byger* here is *bicker*, to skirmish, rather than to fight: it occurs again a few lines below. The slaying of 4000 men out of 5000 seems an exaggerated statement.]

away at a little postern on the back side; at which byker be slain four thousand men of the north, Sir Robert of Ocle (*q. if Ogle?*), and Conyers lyeth the siege on our side, and they it is that have done this act. Some say the queen, Somerset, and the prince should be there. Item, it is talked now for truth the Earl of Northumberland[1] is dead. Item, the Earl of Devonshire is dead justly. Item, my Lord Chancellor[2] is to York. Item, the king and the lords come not here before Whitsuntide[3] as it is said.

Item, Sir, soon upon the chief baron's coming I shall send you a letter with God's grace, who preserve you, and have you in his blessed keeping. Your

THOMAS PLAYTERS.[4]

London, Saturday, 18th of April, 1461. 1. E. IV.

At Cockermouth was the Earl of Wiltshire taken, and these other doctors. Item, some men talk Lord Welles, Lord Willoughby, and Scales be on live (*alive*).

Item, Sir Robert Veer is slain in Cornwall, as it is took for truth.

LETTER CLXIV.—(I. vol. iv. p. 3.)

We have here a most curious account of the difficulties started, and the delays craved, in a suit at law, and we might easily mistake this for a modern letter from a solicitor to his client. It shows us likewise that the difference of manners nearly four hundred years ago and at present is not so great as we are too apt to think it.

To my right reverend and worshipful John Paston, Esq., or to my mistress his wife.

AFTER my most special recommendation, like your mastership (*to*) weet that the matter for you and my mistress your mother against Powtrell and Tanfield hath been called upon as diligently and as hastily this term as it might be, and alway days given them by the court to answer; and then they took small exceptions and trifled forth the court; and alway excused them because the bill is long, and his counsel had no leisure to see it; and they prayed hearing of the testament of my master your father,[5] and thereof made another matter, and argued it to put them from it, because they had emparled[6] to us (*craved respite of us*) before; and then Hillingworth, to drive it over this term, alleged variance betwixt the bill and the testament, that John Damme was named in the testament Joh Dawme,[7] in which case now the court must have sight of the said testament, wherefore ye must send it up the beginning of the next term, or else we shall have no speed in the matter. And therefore, mistress, if my master be not come home, and ye have not the said testament in your keeping, that then it please you to speak unto my mistress your mother-in-law[8] for the said testament, that I might readily have it here, and that it be sealed in a box and sent to me, and I shall keep it safe with God's grace.

And as for tidings in good faith we have none, save the Earl of Wiltshire's[9] head is set on London Bridge.

Master William (*Paston*) is ridden him to

[1] By this account it appears that the Earl of Northumberland was not slain in the battle, but died of his wounds some days after.

[2] George Nevile, Bishop of Exeter, and Lord Chancellor.

[3] Whitsunday, 20th of May.

[4] Thomas Playters was of a good family in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, and at this time seems to have been an attendant about the court. In 1623 the family was honoured with the title of baronet.

[5] Sir William Paston, the judge, who died in 1444.

[6] [*Emparled* is the licence or privilege of a defendant, granted on motion, to have delay of trial, to see if he can settle the matter amicably by talking to the plaintiff, and thus to determine what answer he shall make to the plaintiff's action.]

[7] [This is a most curious objection to have made at a time when the orthography of the language was wholly unsettled, and when proper names were diversely written, even by their owners. In the originals of these letters variations are constantly occurring.]

[8] Dame Agnes Paston, the widow of the judge.

[9] James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire and Ormond, was taken at the battle of Towton, and soon afterwards beheaded. He had been twice Lord High Treasurer.

my mistress Poynings, and as for Master Poynings himself, she letteth as though she wist not where he were.

A gentleman that came from York told me my master was heyl (*healthy*) and merry, and rode to meet the king coming [1] from Middleham castle.

Berwick [2] is full of Scots, and we look by likelihood after another battle now betwixt Scots and us.

And I pray Jesu have you in his blesssed keeping.

Your

THOMAS PLAYTERS.

April, 1461.
1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXV.—(III. vol. i. p. 227.)

This letter, without either date, name or direction, we may discover, from the contents, was written by one of John Paston's sons, soon after the accession of Edward IV. to the throne; and gives a curious representation of the state of affairs in the county of Norfolk at this important period. The reason for this secrecy of address was, lest some one of the Lancastrian party should get possession of the letter, and so discover the sentiments of the Pastons respecting public affairs.

I RECOMMEND me to you, and let you weet, that notwithstanding tidings come down as ye know that people should not come up till they were sent for, but to be ready at all times; this notwithstanding, most people out of this country have taken wages, saying, they will go up to London; but they have no captain nor ruler assigned by the commissioners to await upon, and so they straggle about by themselves, and, by likeliness, are not like to come at London half of them; and men that come from London say there have not passed Thetford not passing 400; and yet the towns and the country that have waged [*hired*[3]] them shall think they be discharged; and therefore if these lords above wait after more people in this country, by likeliness it will not be easy to get without a new commission and warning, and yet it will be thought right strange of them that have waged people, to wage any more, for every town hath waged, and sent forth, and are ready to send forth, as many as they did when the king sent for them before the field at Ludlow;[4] and they that are not gone be going in the same form.

Item, there was shrewd rule toward in this country, for there was a certain person forthwith after the journey at Wakefield[5] gathered fellowship to have murdered John Damme, as is said.

And also there is at the castle of Rising,[6] and in other two places, made great gathering of people and hiring of harness, and it is well understood they be not to the king ward, but rather the contrary, and for to rob.

Wherefore my father[7] is in a doubt whether he shall send my brother up or not, for he would have his own men about him if need were here; but, notwithstanding he will send up Dawbeney his spear and bows with him; as Stapleton[8] and Calthorp or other men of worship of this country agree to do; wherefore demean you in doing of your errands thereafter; and if ye shall bring any message from the lords, take writing, for Darcot's message is not verily believed because he brought no writing.

Item, this country would fain take these false shrews, that are of an opinion contrary to the king and his council, if they had any authority from the king to do so.

Item, my brother is rode to Yarmouth for to let bribers (*hinder plunderers*) that would have robbed a ship under colour of my Lord of Warwick, and belong nothing to them ward.

JOHN PASTON.

1461. 1 E. IV.

[1] This shows that the king was not yet returned out of Yorkshire to London since the battle of Towton.

[2] Henry VI. and his queen after the battle escaped to Berwick, and from thence retired to Edinburgh.

[3] Fenn translates this *engaged*.

[4] Battle at Mortimer's Cross near Ludlow, 2nd of February, 1460, between Edward, then Duke of York, and the Lancastrians under Jasper, Earl of Pembroke, who were routed. Henry VI. was then in London, under the direction of the Earl of Warwick.

[5] Battle of Wakefield, wherein Richard Duke of York was killed, fought 31st of December, 1460.

[6] In Norfolk, it is now a fair and venerable ruin.

[7] John Paston, Esq.; he died in 1466.

[8] Sir Miles Stapleton; he died about 1466.

LETTER CLXVI.—(IV. vol. i. p. 231.)

By this account it appears that Lord Montagu must have marched very soon after the battle of Towton to the siege of Carlisle; but our historians are silent on this subject. J. Paston does not appear to have been knighted at the coronation, John Markham and William Yelverton were called to the degree of serjeants, in 1440, and in 1444 both made judges; the former succeeded as chief justice of the King's Bench in 1462. Below the direction of this letter, and in a more modern hand, is written, "J. Paston, wh others imbilled to be made knights at the coronation of E. ye iiijth."

To my right good master, John Paston, in all haste.

After my most special recommendation, please your mastership weet; the king, because of the siege of Carlisle, changed his day of coronation to be upon the Sunday next after Saint John Baptist, to the intent to speed him northward in all haste. And how be it, blessed be God, that he hath now good tidings that Lord Montagu hath broken the siege, and slain of Scots six thousand, and two knights, whereof Lord Clifford's brother is one, yet notwithstanding he will be crowned the said Sunday.

And John Jenney informed me, and as I have verily learned sithen (*since*) ye are inbilled to be made a knight at this coronation; whether ye have understanding beforehand, I wot not; but and it like you to take the worship upon you, considering the comfortable tidings aforesaid, and for the gladness and pleasure of all your well-willers, and to the pine and discomfort of all your ill-willers, it were time your gear necessary on that behalf were purveyed for: and also ye had need hight[1] you (*come*) to London, for as I conceive the knights should be made upon the Saturday before the coronation. And as much as may be purveyed for you in secret wise without cost I shall bespeak for you, if need be, against your coming, in trust of the best; nevertheless if ye be disposed, ye had need send a man before in all haste, that nothing be to seek. William Calthorp is inbilled, and Yelverton is inbilled, which caused Markham; because Yelverton looked to have been chief judge, and Markham thinketh to please him thus. And as for the matter against Pontrell,[2] we can no farther proceed till we have my master your father's testament; I sent my mistress a letter for it. No more, but I pray Almighty Jesu have you in his keeping.

Your Thomas Playters.

London,
May or June, 1461.
1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXVII.—(II. vol. iv. p. 7.)

In Letter L. we have seen that the Duke of Norfolk reported that Sir John Fastolf had given him Caister: we find he has now asserted his claim, and seems to be in possession: and though this letter contains nothing very curious, yet as it relates to Caister and to the possession of that estate, it was proper to give it to the reader, as it leads to a previous knowledge of circumstances, which a few years after brought on the regular siege of that place, the account of which is both remarkable and curious. It seems by this letter that the Duke of Norfolk was at this time keeping his secret house at the lodge, where the writer of this letter was not permitted to speak with him. The order for the establishment of the secret house is given in the Earl of Northumberland's Household-Book, where it is said that "at certain times of the year the nobility retired from their principal mansion to some little adjoining lodge; where they lived private, no longer kept open house, but put their servants to board-wages, dismissed part of them to go to their friends, and only retained a few of the most necessary about their person." Edward IV. was crowned on Monday the 29th of June, 1461; and from the mention of his coronation the exact date of this letter is ascertained. Corpus Christi day is the Thursday after the octave of Whitsunday.

To my right reverend and worshipful master, my master John Paston.

Right reverend and worshipful master, I lowly recommend me unto your good mastership, pleaseth you to weet that I have been at Framlingham, and spake (*with*) Richard Southwell to have his advice in this matter, wherein he would give me but little counsel, and said ye were strangely disposed, for ye

[1] [There is no authority, we believe, for this translation of *hight*, although it here appears to be the meaning. The original may probably have been *pight*, to place or make ready.]

[2] [Powtrell in a previous letter.]

trusted no man; and had much language which the bearer hereof shall inform your mastership.

And as for the letters, they were delivered my lord at the lodge, but I could not speak with his lordship, and such time as they were delivered Fitzwilliam was there, which is now keeper of Caister, and what time as (*when*) my lord had seen the letters, he commanded him to avoid [*leave*], and so he did; and then my lord sent for Southwell, and in the mean time my lord sent a man to me and asked me where ye were, and I told him ye were with the king, and so he sent me word that an answer should be made by Southwell to the king, saying that two or three heirs had been with my lord and showed their evidence, and delivered it to my lord, saying they have great wrong, beseeching my lord that it might be reformed; wherefore he commanded me that I should go home, for other answer could I none have; so I abode (*waited*) upon Southwell to have known my lord's answer to the king, which answer Southwell told me was, that he writeth to the king that certain points in your letters be untrue, and that he shall prove (*at*) such time as he cometh before the king, beseeching the king to take it to no displeasure, for he is advised to keep it still unto the time that he hath spoken with his highness, for he trusteth to God to show such evidence to the king and to the lords that he should have best right and title thereto; and so he sent a man forth to the king this day; it were right well done ye awaited upon his man coming, that ye might know the ready intent of my lord's writing.

Bartholomew Ellis hath been with my lord, and made a release to my lord; and Sir William Chamberlaine was there two days before I came thither, I can think for the same matter; and Thomas Fastolf was there the same time that I was there, and as I am informed they have delivered my lord certain evidence; wherefore me seemeth it were right well done, saving your better advice, to come home and seal up your evidence, and have them with you to London, to prove his title nought. There be but two or three men within the place, and if ye think it best to do it send word, and I suppose a remedy shall be had.

Also, I hear no word of Master William, nor of the writs for the parliament. Also it is told here that Todenham and Heydon have a pardon of the king, and that they shall come up to London with the Lady of Suffolk to the coronation; also as for the letter that ye sent to Thomas Wingfield, I have it still, for he is at London; some men say he moved my lord for to enter, and some say Fitzwilliam is in default, so I can see there is but few good. Also my master Sir Thomas Howes shall send a letter to the person ye weet of for to deliver you the gear at London the next week. My right worshipful and reverend master, Almighty God preserve you. Written at Norwich, on the morrow after Corpus Christi day.

Your poor servant and beadsman,

RICHARD CALLE.

Norwich,
Friday, 5th of June,
1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXVIII.—(V. vol. i. p. 233.)

The manners of the times being what I wish to point out, this letter affords a remarkable instance of the superstition of that age. Holy Innocents, or Childermas day, is the 28th of December, a day reputed so unlucky, that during the year many people even now (this is observed likewise in the 'Spectator') will not begin any new piece of work on that day of the week on which it happens. In the year 1460 this *unfortunate* day fell on a Sunday; at that time therefore they must reckon forwards in the next year for the weekly Childermas day, according as it happened in the December of the year preceding; as the 28th of June, in no year, could be on the same day of the week as the 28th of December in the same year; but it would seem that at this time they observed only the 28th day of every month as a Childermas day, and therefore ominous. Supposing it to have been either way, we here find this piece of superstition countenanced by a priest and celebrated preacher; for such we must suppose Fryar Brakle, the person appointed to preach at St. Paul's at so public a time as the day preceding a coronation.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, at Heylesdon, in Norfolk, in haste.

AFTER due recommendation had; please it your mastership to weet, that as for Playters he shall excuse the writ of the parliament, &c. As touching my Master Howard, I cannot

yet speak with him nor with Montgomery neither; but as for the day of the coronation of the king, it shall be certainly the Monday next after Midsummer, and it is told me that ye amongst others are named to be made knight at the coronation, &c.

Item, it is said, that the coronation done, the king will into the north part forthwith; and therefore shall not the parliament hold, but writs shall go into every shire to give them that are chosen knights of the shire day after Michaelmas; this is told me by such as are right credible.

Master Brakle shall preach at Paul's on Sunday next coming, as he told me, and he told me, that for cause Childermas day fall on the Sunday, the coronation shall on the Monday.

Written in haste at London, the Sunday next tofore Midsummer.

Your right poor servant,

JAMES GRESHAM.

London, Sunday, 21st of June,
1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXIX.—(III. vol. iv. p. 11.)

[Common swearing is stated by the historians to have been very prevalent prior to and during this period; but we have in these letters met with few expressions tending to oaths; in this one, however, the writer first says perde, meaning par Dieu; a little farther he writes "by God;" and he concludes with a still stronger adjuration.]

To my master, Paston.

RIGHT worshipful and mine especial good master, I recommend me to you with all my service, beseeching you heartily, at the reverence of God, to help me now in the greatest extremity that I came at since my great trouble with Ingham.

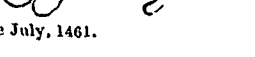
It is not out of your remembrance how Twyer in Norfolk vexeth me both by noise and searching mine house for me, so that there I cannot be in quiet, and all that, I am verily ascertained, is by Heydon's craft; and here in the king's house anenst (*by means of*) Howard, where I had hoped to have relieved myself, I am supplanted and cast out from him by a clamour of all his servants at once; and *ne* (*nothing*) were, only that his disposition accordeth not to my poor conceit, which maketh me to give less force, because I desire not to deal there (*where*) bribery is like to be used, else by my truth this unhappy unkindness would I trow have killed me.[1] I pray you at the reverence of Jesus Christ to inform my Lord of Warwick of me; perde (*par Dieu*) I have done him service; I was with him at Northampton, that all men know, and now again at St. Alban's, that knoweth James Ratcliffe, and there lost I twenty pounds worth horse, harness, and money, and was hurt in divers places. I pray you to get me his good lordship, and that I may be toward him in Norfolk in his courts holding, or else, if anything he has to do; and that ye will get me a letter to Twyer to let me sit in rest, for now if I made any fellowship against Twyer,[2] I can have no colour, now the sheriff and I be out; so I must keep me apart, which I am loath to do, by God, if I might better do.

I beseech you to send me your intent by the next man that come from you; I should have come to you, but, so help me God, my purse may no farther.

The Trinity preserve you. Written hastily at York, &c.

Yours, to his power,

THOMAS DENYES.



York, before July, 1461.
1 Ed. VI.

[1] [The foregoing sentence is very obscure, but it stands thus, without any explanation, in Fenn's translation, and corresponds with the original as he has given it. We are, however, inclined to think there has been an error in the transcription, and that it should read thus:—and nothing were (*i. e.* there were no causes) save only that his disposition accordeth not to my poor conceit, (*i. e.* that his disposition, being greedy, accordeth not to my poor wit or reason, which maketh me to give less, *for* because I desire, &c. The use of the word *for* before *because* is not unfrequent in our earlier writers.]

[2] [That is, used any collected force against Twyer.]

LETTER CLXX.—(IV. vol iv. p. 15.)

I think this letter was written about the beginning of Edward IVth's reign; but of that I cannot be certain. It shows Waryn Herman to be a troublesome neighbour. [Church of Burlingham seems to have been a sturdy opponent of the clergy, for though his goods are seized and himself thrown into prison, he avows what he has already done and said, and threatens damage to a greater person and to a greater extent than what he had already inflicted.]

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, praying you that ye will send me word in haste how ye be agreed with Witchingham and Inglos for that matter that ye spake to me of at your departing, for if I should purvey either wood or hay it should be bought best cheap betwixt this and Saint Margaret's mass (*20th July*), as it is told me. As for Appleyard he come not yet to this town since he come from London; I have sent to Sir Bryse to let me have knowledge when he cometh to town, and he hath promised that I shall have knowledge, and when he cometh I shall do your commandment. My mother bade me send you word that Waryn Herman hath daily fished her water all this year, and therefore she prayeth you to do therefore, while ye be at London, as ye think best. Church[1] of Burlingham was taken and brought to the castle yesterday by the bishop's men, and all his goods be seized for that he oweth to the bishop; and the said Church saith, as for that he hath said of them that he hath appealed before this time, he will avow it, and abide thereby; and saith that he will appeal one that hath more nobles than they have all that he hath spoken of yet, and that shall avail the king more than they have all that he hath spoken of yet, but what he is he will not name till he know more. I *trow* but if (*unless*) there be the great labour made against him, he is like to have great favour of them that have been his supporters; men think, that have spoken with him, that he hopeth to have good help; I pray God that the truth might be known.

I pray you that ye will vouchsafe to send me another sugar-loaf, for my old is done; and also that ye will do make (*have made*) a girdle for your daughter, for she hath need thereof. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written at Norwich, in haste, on the Tuesday next before Saint Thomas's day.

Paper is dainty.[2] Yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Tuesday,
end of June or beginning of July,
about 1461. 1 Ed. IV.

LETTER CLXXI.—(V. vol. iv. p. 19.)

This letter was written in the beginning of July in the year 1461, 1 E. IV. and relates to election matters. The multitude of commons must mean such as possessed freehold lands to the yearly value of 40*s.*; for in the eighth and tenth years of the reign of Henry VI. acts of parliaments passed to restrain all those from voting for knights of the shire who did not possess that property, &c. See 8 H. VI. c. vii. and 10 H. VI. c. ii. The last sentence is a prettily-turned compliment upon his mistress, Margaret Paston. It appears from the following letters that the writer of this was murdered a very few days after he wrote it, by a party in the interest of the House of Lancaster. [The Commons' testimonial seems not to have been confined to freeholders, but to be from the people generally. We have transposed this and the following letter from Fenn's arrangement, as it is clear that Berney's letter was written after Denyes' death. This letter must therefore have been written before July 10.]

To my right noble and worshipful mistress, my Mistress Paston, or to William Paston, if she be absent.

RIGHT noble and worshipful mistress, I recommend me to you with my poor service, and forsomuch as I hear nothing of my master your husband's coming hastily home; and though he come or come not, it were expedient

[1] Whom Church means to appeal, or for what offence, does not appear, though it seems to be for some misdemeanor for which a fine would accrue to he king. [*Appeal* is here used in the sense of *accuse*.]

[2] "Paper is deynty:" this, I believe, *is* the only letter in which a want of paper is complained of. The letter is written upon a piece nearly square, out of which a quarter had been cut before the letter was written.

that the king were informed of the demeaning of the shire, therefore I send to you a testimonial which is made by a great assent of great multitude of commons to send to the king; I pray you for the good speed thereof that in all haste possible ye like to send it to my said master if he be with the king, else find the mean to send it to the king though my master be thence; beside further that ye vouchsafe to let diligent labour be made to a sufficient number to asseal for my master alone, for if both hold not I would one held.

I pray you that it like you to send for my master, William Paston, and show him all this, and that it were hasted, for on the adversary's part Judas sleepeth not.

Berney promised to have sent, but for our Lord's love trust not that, for I see his sloth and silly labour, which is no labour, and I would full fain speak with you, &c.

My master, your husband, will peradventure blame us all if this matter be not applied, for he may not of reason do so largely herein by his might, because he is elyted (*elected*),[1] as the commons might wisely do with help of his favour if it were wisely wrought. If my master William Paston ride hastily from a x dayes (*within ten days*) to London, I will with him if he send me word. The Holy Trinity preserve you.

Written rudely in haste the Sunday, &c.

Men say, send a wise man on thy errand and say little to him, wherefore I write briefly and little.

THOMAS DENYES.

Sunday,
July, 1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXII.—(VI. vol. i. p. 237.)

[We have in this letter a very curious instance of the tendency to defamation and exaggeration, arising from limited publicity. After the press had come fully into operation, such unfounded charges as are here made could never have been hazarded, as they would have been followed by instant contradiction and the disgrace of the libeller. Fenn remarks: "Private duelling was unknown here at this period, and long after; the king's licence for a combat was necessary to be obtained; this procured, the combat proceeded publicly; in all matters of treason the vanquished party was immediately executed." The principle, however, avowed in this letter, seems to approach very closely to the modern practice; one party accuses the other of asserting falsehoods, and offers to make it good as "a gentleman."]

To the worshipful John Paston, and William Rokewoode, Esq., and to overreach (each) of them.

RIGHT worshipful cousins, I recommend me to you; and forasmuch as I am credibly informed how that Sir Myles Stapylton, knight, with other ill-disposed persons, defame and falsely noise me in murdering of Thomas Denyes, the coroner; and how that I intend to make insurrections contrary unto the law; and the said Stapylton farthermore noiseth me with great robberies, in which defamations and false noisings the said Stapylton, and in that his saying, he is false, that knoweth God, &c. And for my plain acquittal, if he or any substantial gentleman will say it and avow it, I say to it contrary; and by licence of the king to make it good as a gentleman. And in this my plain excuse, I pray you to open it unto the lords, that the said Stapylton, &c. make great gatherings of the king's rebellions (*rebels*) lying in wait to murder me; and in that I may make open proof. Written in haste the 10th day of July, in the 1st year of the reign of Edward IV.

JOHN BERNEY.

Remember to take a writ to choose coroners in Norfolk.

10th of July, 1461. 1 E. IV.

[1] [*Elected* does not appear to convey a right meaning, as, if elected, he would surely have been able to do more "largely." We think it more probably means *elided*—left or struck out. We think the meaning to be that if left out in the presentation of the testimonial to the king, he could not use his might so largely in favour of the commons as he could otherwise do.]

LETTER CLXXIII.—(VI. vol. iv. p. 21.)

This letter is undoubtedly written by John Paston to his wife Margaret Paston; it is therefore difficult to say why he directs to her as to his cousin. I suppose from the late change of government he was cautious of being known to correspond with any one, lest he should be suspected by either party; and as this letter was on matters relative to an election of knights of the shire, he might be particularly careful not to have his sentiments known, fearing another change might take place, as the times were so unsettled. Sir John Howard was sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk at this time, though the under-sheriff seems to have been the manager in these election disputes. J. Paston's advice concerning the election seems not only judicious, but calculated to promote the peace of the county; a thing at this period much to be desired by the new king.

To my cousin, Margaret Paston.

I RECOMMEND me to you, letting you weet that the under-sheriff doubteth him of John Berney, wherefore I pray ye bring them together, and set them accord [*in agreement*][1] if ye can, so that the said under-sheriff be sure that he shall not be hurt by him nor of his countrymen; and if he will not, let him verily understand that he shall be compelled to find him surety of the peace to agree on this head, and that shall neither be profitable nor worshipful; and let him weet that there have been many complaints of him by that knavish knight, Sir Miles Stapylton,[2] as I sent you word before, but he shall come to his excuse well enough so he have a man's heart, and the said Stapylton shall be understood as he is, a false shrew, and he and his wife and other have blavered (*blabbed* or *prated*) here of my kindred in hoder moder (*hugger-mugger, clandestinely*), but, by that time we have reckoned of old days and late days, mine shall be found more worshipful than his and his wife's, or else I will not for his gilt gypcer *purse*).

Also tell the said Berney that the sheriff is in a doubt whether he shall make a new election of knights of the shire, because of him and Grey, wherein it were better for him to have the sheriff's good will.

Item, me thinketh for quiet of the country it were most worshipful, that as well Berney as Grey should get a record of all such that might spend forty shillings a-year, that were at the day of election, which of them that had fewest to give it up as reason would.[3] Written at London, on Relick Sunday.[4]

Item, that ye send about for silver according to the old bill that I sent you from Lynn.

JOHN PASTON.

London, Sunday,
12th July, 1461.
1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXIV.—(VII. vol. iv. p. 25.)

This is an answer to the preceding letter, and is plainly written by Margaret Paston to her husband John Paston, though it has no direction: it informs him what she had done towards executing his commands, and gives him further information. Richard Cheyne was parson of Little Snoring at this time, and John Fowler of Great Snoring. [The setting of the parson in the stocks, and the personating of Scottish soldiers in order to extort money, are two curious incidents. The Scotch had been brought in by Queen Margaret, and had probably received letters of safe-conduct for their return.]

Margaret Paston to John Paston.

I RECOMMEND me to you; please you to weet that I have sent to my cousin Berney, according to your desire in the letter that ye did write on Relick Sunday to me, whereupon he hath written a letter to you and another bill to me, the which I send you. He told the messenger that I sent to him, that the under-

[1] [Fenn translates *through*.]

[2] Sir Miles Stapylton, knight, of Ingham, died in 1466, and was there buried; his first wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Simon Felbrigg; his second was Catherine, daughter of Thomas de la Pole, second son to the Earl of Suffolk; she was living in 1464, and was most probably the lady here mentioned.

[3] [This seems to have been a doubtful or contested return for a member for the county between Berney and Grey. John Paston's recommendation is a sort of scrutiny, probably not so expensive a proceeding then as it is now.]

[4] Relick Sunday is the Sunday following the translation of St. Thomas à Becket.

sheriff needeth not to fear him, nor none of his, for he said, after the election was done, he spake with him at the Grey Friars, and prayed him of his good mastership, and said to him that he feared no man of bodily harm but only Twyer and his fellowship.

Item, Sir John Tatersalle, and the bailiff of Walsingham, and the constable, hath taken the parson of Snoring and four of his men, and set them fast in the stocks on Monday at night; and as it is said they should be carried up to the king in haste, God defend it but they be chastised as the law will. Twyer and his fellowship beareth a great weight of Thomas Denyes' death in the country about Walsingham, and it is said there, if John Osbern had ought him as good will as he did before that he was acquainted with Twyer he should not have died, for he might (*have*) ruled all Walsingham as he had list, as it is said.

Item, William Lynys, that was with Master Fastolf, and such other as he is with him, go fast about in the country and bear men a [*in*] hand, priests and other, they be Scots, and take bribes of them and let them go again. He took the last week the parson of Fritton, and but for my cousin Jernyngham the younger they would have led him forth with them, and he told them plainly if they made any such doings there, but (*unless*) they had the letter to show for them, they should have aley *on* their bodies (*be beaten*);[1] it were well done that they were met with betimes. It is told me that the said William reporteth of you as shamefully as he can in divers places. Jesu have you in his keeping. Written in haste, the Wednesday after Relick Sunday.

If the under-sheriff come home I will assay to do for him as ye desired me in your letter; as for money, I have sent about, and I can get none but 13*s.* 4*d.* since ye went out; I will do my part to get more as hastily as I may.

By your MARGARET PASTON.

Wednesday,
15th July, 1461.
1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXV.—(VII. vol. i. p. 239.)

It was certainly incumbent upon the king to pay every mark of attention to those who had espoused his cause, and helped to seat him on the throne, and to make them appear with consequence amongst their tenants and dependents as noticed and rewarded by him: at the same time, it was certainly a wise measure in the prince to endeavour to attach to his interest as many as he could of those who had espoused a contrary party. This Edward seems to have been endeavouring to accomplish, though, if we may suppose the writer of this letter unbiassed, he began already to neglect those who had served him in the most critical time.

To the worshipful John Paston, and to my cousin William Rokewood, Esq. with my Lord of Canterbury.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, praying you heartily to labour for that the king may write unto me, giving me thanking of the goodwill and service that I have done unto him, and in being with him against his adversaries and rebellions, as well in the north as in this country of Norfolk. And in that the king should please the commons in this country; for they grudge, and say how that the king receiveth such of this country, &c. as have been his great enemies, and oppressors of the commons; and such as have assisted his highness be not rewarded; and it is to be considered, or else it will hurt, as me seemeth by reason; and in aid of this changeable rule it were necessary to move the lords spiritual and temporal, by the which it might be reformed, &c. And in case that any of mine old enemies, Todenham, Stapylton, and Heydon, with their affinity, labour the king and lords unto my hurt, I am and will be ready to come to my sovereign lord for my excuse, so that I may

[1] [The original has "they should aley on her bodys." Fenn's interpolation appears unnecessary and his explanation too precise. We have not met with the word *aley* elsewhere in our older writers, but think it signifies here the same as *alewe* used by Spencer and others for howling, crying through suffering.]

come safe for unlawful hurt purveyed by my said enemies. No more at this time, but God preserve you in grace. Written at Witchingham, the 16th day in the month of July, in the first year of the reign of Edward IV.

JOHN BERNEY.

Please it you move this unto my Lords Canterbury, Ely, Norwich,[1] &c.

Witchingham,
16th of July, 1461.
1 E. IV.

This letter was sealed with an oval seal of wax, having a braid of twine round it, of which we give an engraving.

LETTER CLXXVI.—(VIII. vol. iv. p. 29.)

This is the letter mentioned by Margaret Paston in the previous one to her husband, and explains the behaviour of the under-sheriff, who appears to have been in an opposite interest to Berney, and in the party of the lately dethroned King Henry. The other letter sent by Berney is No. clxxii. dated the 10th of July, 1461.

To the right worshipful John Paston, Esq. in haste.

SIR, I recommend me to you, &c. and as for my plain disposition towards the under-sheriff, I will him no bodily hurt, nor (*he*) shall not be hurt by me, nor by no man that I may rule; but the commons through all the shire be moved against him for cause of his light demeaning towards them for this election of knights of the shire for the parliament; and I suppose, if that he will, he may be hastily eased; as thus, let him make notice unto the said commons that this their election shall stand, or else let him purchase a new writ, and let him make writing unto them what day they shall come, and they to make a new election according unto the law; and, Sir, I pray you say to him, that it is not his honesty to lie upon too[2] many men, noising them rebyliones (*rebels*) of Norfolk, and B. (*Berney*) their captain. No more to you at this time, but I have sent you two letters within this eight days. Written the 17th day of July, in the 1st year of the reign of Edward IV.

JOHN BERNEY.

Friday,
17 July, 1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXVII.—(IX. vol. iv. p. 31.)

This and some of the foregoing letters are very curious, as they afford a striking picture of the times, and display the misfortunes ever attendant on the people at large when so violent a convulsion happens in the government of a kingdom.

To my worshipful husband, John Paston, this letter be delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, please it you to weet that I am desired by Sir John Tatersalle to write to you for a commission, or an oyer and terminer, for to be sent down into this country to sit upon the parson of Snoring, and on such as was cause of Thomas Denyes' death, and for many and great horrible robberies; and as for the costs thereof the country will pay therefore, for they be sore afraid but (*unless*) the said death be chastised, and the said robberies, they are afraid that more folks shall be served in like wise. As for the priest and six of his men that be taken, they be delivered to Twyer, and four be with them of the country's cost for to be sent with to the king; and if they be brought up, at the reverence of God do your part that they escape not, but that they may have the judgment of the law and as they have deserved; and be committed to prison, not to depart till they be inquired of their foresaid robbery by such

[1] Thomas Bourchier was Archbishop of Canterbury William Gray Bishop of Ely, and Walter Hart Bishop of Norwich.

[2] [*Too* in original; Fenn in error has *so*.]

a commission that ye can get, that the king and the lords may understand what rule they have been of, not only for the murders and the robberies, but as well for the great insurrection that they were like a made (*to have made*) within the shire. The priests of Caister they be straitly take heed[1] at by Robert Harrherer and other, so that the said priests may have nothing out of their own nor of other men's but they be ransacked, and the place is watched both by day and night; the priests think right long till they (*have*) tidings from you. At the reverence of God beware how ye go and ride, for it is told me that ye be threatened of them that be naughty fellows, that hath been inclining to them that hath been your old adversaries.

The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written in haste, the Saturday next before Saint Margaret.

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Saturday,
18th July, 1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXVIII.—(X. vol. iv. p. 33.)

This letter appears to have been written in 1461, as it insinuates a suspicion of treason against Sir Thomas Todenham, &c. who was a faithful Lancastrian, and suffered on the block, for corresponding with the late queen, in the February following the date of this letter.

To the right worshipful Sir and my good master, my master, John Paston, be this delivered.

REVEREND and right worshipful Sir, and my good master, I recommend me to you; praying you to weet that there is raised a slanderous noise in this country upon my master Yelverton, and you, and my master Alyngton, which I suppose is done to bring you out of the conceit of the people, for at this day ye stand greatly in the country's conceit.

It is said by Heydon and his disciples that my master Yelverton, and ye, and my master Alyngton, should have do (*made*) one Sir Thomas Tartyssale[2] parson of the east church of Warham,[3] and chaplain to the Prior of Walsingham,[4] to put into the parliament a bill of divers treasons done by my Lord of Norwich,[5] Sir Thomas Todenham, and John Heydon, and ye should have set (*there*)to your seals; and if that Heydon had been six hours from the parliament longer than he was, there had been granted an oyer determiner to have inquired of them, &c. This was told yesterday in right worshipful audience, and among the thriftiest men of this country; and they said right shrewdly, for my Lord of Norwich hath so flattered the lay people as he hath ridden about [*in*] his visitation that he hath their hearts; wherefore and (*if*) it please you to let me have knowledge what ye would I should say to it, where as I hear any such language, I will do my part, and have done hitherward as I have thought in my conceits best, &c. and if there be any other service that ye will command me, I am and will be ready at your commandment with the grace of God, who ever have you in his blessed keeping. Written at Wighton in haste, on Saint James's day.

By your servant,

JAMES GLOYS.

Wighton,
Saturday, 25th July,
1461. 1 E. IV.

James Gloys

[1] ["Tak hede" of the original is perhaps intended for *attached*; or it may mean that they be "stroytoley" watched, only that this is said afterwards.]

[2] [Probably the same name, though not the same person, as the Tatersalle of several preceding letters.]

[3] There were three churches in the parish of Warham.

[4] Thomas Hunt was admitted prior in 1437.

[5] Walter Lyhart [or Hart, as he is named in page 138,] was declared Bishop of Norwich by papal provision in 1446. He was a man of singular wisdom, and, being of a peaceable disposition, was much beloved by the citizens. In 1449 he entertained King Henry VI. at his palace in Norwich, and being a man of great political abilities, was sent in the same year ambassador into Savoy. He died on Whitsunday, 24th of May, 1472, and was buried directly before the rood loft in his own cathedral.

LETTER CLXXIX.—(XI. vol. iv. p. 37.)

This letter is not the only one from John Paston, to his wife, which is directed to his cousin Margaret Paston. He had therefore, I suppose, at this time some particular reasons for concealing his correspondence; it might be either for some public reason on the late change of government, or for some private reason on his own affairs. John Berney was the second son of John Berney, Esq. of Reedham, and inherited from his father estates in Witchingham; he was uncle to Margaret Paston, and died in July 1461. His worth in money and plate was considerable for that age, and the caution which was taken in those unsettled times to conceal property is worthy observation. As Thomas Holler was become, by the decease of John Berney, the only person who had knowledge of some of his property, the desire which Paston expresses that his wife should first get information, and then acquaint him with his friend's death, seems to insinuate doubts of his honesty respecting the goods, &c. The hint, too, that he has a written account of them, any implies the same suspicion.

To my worshipful cousin, Margaret Paston, be this delivered in haste.

I RECOMMEND me unto you, letting you weet that your uncle John Berney is dead, (*on*) whose soul God have mercy! desiring you to send for Thomas Holler, and inquire of him where his good is, and what he is worth, and that he take good heed to all such goods as he had, both moveable and unmoveable, for I understand that he is worth in money five hundred marks (333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and in plate to the value of other five hundred marks, beside other goods; wherefore I would ye should not let him weet of his decease unto the time that ye had inquired of the said Thomas Holler of all such matters as be above written; and when he hath informed you thereof, then let him weet verily that he is dead, desiring him that no man come into his place at Reedham but himself, unto the time that I come.

Item, I let you weet that great part of his good is at William Taverner's as I understand. Thomas Holler will tell you justly the truth as I suppose, and desire him on my behalf that he do so, and there is writing thereof; and tell Thomas Holler that I and he be executors named, and therefore let him take heed that the goods be kept safe, and that nobody know where it shall lie but ye and Thomas Holler; and Thomar Holler, as your uncle told me, is privy where all his good lieth, and all his writings; and so I will that ye be privy to the same for casualty of death, and ye two shall be his executors for me as long as ye do truly, as I trow verily ye will. Written at London the 28th day of July.

I require you be of good comfort, and be not heavy [*slow*] if ye will do aught for me.

Your JOHN PASTON.

London, Tuesday,
28th July, 1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXX.—(XII. vol. iv. p. 39.)

We have here an instance of the tumultuous and desperate manner in which distresses were made; in this case corn seems to have been the object. It appears that another entry of the same kind was intended. It is not said which of his sons J. Paston had sent. [In cases of disputed right, which this appears to have been, force is yet frequently used on both sides, as the readiest means of trying the right legally, although only incidentally, upon the question of assault or riot. The levy would appear to have been intended on the crops, but "Blake had hoom the corn" before the 24th of August, a rather early harvest.]

To my worshipful and right good master, John Paston, Esq.

WORSHIPFUL Sir, and my right good master, I recommend me to you, and heartily I thank your good mastership that ye liked to send my master your son to Sporle with such fellowship as ye did, for which I am ever bound to do you service, praying you of your good continuance.

Sir, the cause, why I came not was this, I was fallen sick with an axis[1] (*access*), and truly that caused me that I and my fellowship tarried, and so because thereof I caused my lady to write a special letter to my Lord Scales, but for all that Blake hath home the corn

[1] An axes, or access, from the French word acces, means the fit or paroxysm of a disease, and in this place most probably may be considered as an ague fit.

in my Lady of Suffolk's name; and the cause why I sent no word of my sickness was that I would not mine enemy should be rejoiced by the knowledge of my sickness, so God help me; the fellowship that was ready to go was right sorry that they might not go farther with me, and my lord's and my lady's[1] will was that they should have gone farther, but if I had been hele (*well*) and not sick, there should have come a worshipful fellowship out of Suffolk of so little warning, but truly I lay sick at Ipswich of the access both Sunday and Monday; but, Sir, since ye have showed me so kindly your good mastership, I pray you I may have your fellowship ready at another time to help to execute a commission touching Blake, and that they may be ready within two days after ye have warning; and, Sir, my service is ready to you at all times, as ye show me great cause to do you service.

Written at Thelverton, the Wednesday next before St. Bartholomew's day (*21th of August*) in haste.

Your servant,

WILLIAM JENNEY.[2]

Thelverton, Wednesday,
August, 1461 or 1462. 1 or 2 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXXI.—(XIII. vol. iv. p. 43.)

This letter was written whilst the Earl of Warwick was in the North Marches, endeavouring to manage matters with regard to the Scots. He went thither soon after the coronation, and before the king had called a parliament. What the matter was in which J. Paston had been so strangely treated does not appear. The account of his son is curious, and shows us that in that remote age money was in a certain degree as necessary as it would be now, for the bringing a young gentleman properly forward amongst his equals. It appears from several of these letters that J. Paston kept his children rather too strait for a man of his birth and fortune.

To my right worshipful and reverend master, John Paston, at Norwich.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, and my right honourable master, I recommend me lowly to you; and please your mastership to weet that my master Clement your brother and Playters wrote a letter to my master your son yesterday, the tenor of which was how ye were entreated there, and as ye desired me, so I informed them the matter along, for they wist not of it till I told them, and they wrote the more pleynerly [*fully*][3] inasmuch as a worshipful man rode the same day, and bare the letter to my said master your son.[4]

The Lord Bourchier is with the king, and my Lord Warwick still in the north, &c.

Item, Sir, this day came one John Waynfleet from the king straitway, and he is of mine acquaintance: and he told me there was no voice nor speaking about the king of that matter, and I told him all the matter along how ye were entreated, which he will put in remembrance in any place that he cometh in in Suffolk or Essex as he goeth homewards, for he oweth no good-will to your adversary. And the said Waynfleet told me that he knoweth for certain the king cometh not into Norfolk till he hath been upon the marches of Wales, and so there is no certainty of his coming this many days; he told me he left the king with a small fellowship about him.

And I inquired (*of*) him of the guiding of my master your son, which he commended greatly, and said that he stood well in conceit, and daily should increase; and he was well in acquaintance and beloved with gentlemen about the king; but he said there shall nothing hurt him but your straitness of

[1] I suppose these mean the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk.

[2] William Jenney, of Knotishall, in Suffolk, was an eminent lawyer, and in 1477 was made a judge of the King's Bench: he died in 1483, aged above sixty years. I believe this letter was written in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV. On the back is written, in an ancient hand, "A friendly l're of W. Jenney, who after became a mortal enemye."

[3] [Fenn translates "plainerly" (*plainly*) It is apparently from the French *plein*.]

[4] [This is a curious exemplification of the evils arising from uncertain means of communication. It would appear from this that the contents of the letter, as far as regarded matters of importance, must depend much upon the trust-worthiness of the messenger. Hero, as the messenger was "a w'rchypfull man," the letter was written "more pleynerly" than it would otherwise have been. "The matter in which J. Paston, had been so strangely treated," was probably the quarrel with Howard's men, alluded to by his son in Letter clxxxii.]

money to him, for without he have money in his purse, so as he may reasonably spend among them, else they will not set by him; and there be gentlemen's sons of less reputation, that hath money more liberal ten times than he hath; and so in that the said Waynfleet said it were full necessary for you to remember, &c.

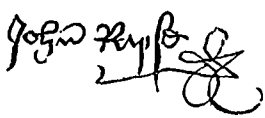
As for tidings here be none new, &c. I trust I shall bring you a letter from my master your son, or than (*when*) I come, for which I shall rather than fail abide one day the longer; and Jesu have you, my right honourable master, in his merciful governance, and preserve you from adversity. Written at London on St. Bartholomew's even.

I can speak with no man but that think the guiding of your adversary hath been in many causes right strange, and, as it is supposed, that he shall understand at the parliament, but for God's sake have men enough about you, for ye understand his unmannerly disposition.

Your beadsman and servant,

JOHN RUSSE.

London, Sunday,
23 August, 1461. 1 E. IV.



LETTER CLXXXII.—(XIV. vol. iv. p. 47.)

This is a most curious letter, and exhibits an undisguised picture of great men in the fifteenth century. J. Paston shows himself a persevering advocate, and my Lord of Essex a true courtier. He at last mentions the business to the king, and informs J. Paston of the king's conversation on the subject, which certainly redounds much to his majesty's honour. The hint from Berners, my Lord Treasurer's man, is cleverly introduced, and the manner of making the compliment to the Earl of Essex is ingeniously contrived, and shows Berners to be one who understood his business well. He was most probably a relation of the Earl's family, as the Earl's brother, John Bourchier, married Margery, a daughter of Sir Thomas Berners, of West Horsely, in Surrey.

To my right reverend and worshipful father, John Paston, Esq., dwelling in Heylesdon, be this letter delivered in haste.

MOST reverend and worshipful father, I recommend me heartily, and submit me lowlily, to your good fatherhood, beseeching you for charity of your daily blessing; I beseech you to hold me excused that I sent to you none erst (*no earlier*) no writing, for I could not speed to mine intent the matters[1] that ye sent to me for. I have laboured daily my Lord of Essex,[2] Treasurer of England, to have moved the king both of the manor (*of*) Dedham and of the bill copy of the court roll every morning afore he went to the king, and often times inquired of him and (*if*) he had moved the king in these matters; he answered me nay, saying it was no time, and said he would it were as fain sped as I myself, oft times delaying me, that in truth I thought to have sent you word that I feeled by him that he was not willing to move the king therein; nevertheless I laboured to him continually, and prayed Baronners (*Berners?*) his man to remember him of it. I told often times to my said lord that I had a man tarrying in town that I should have sent to you for other sundry matters, and he tarryed for nothing but that I might send you by him an answer of the said matters; other times beseeching him to speed me in these matters for this cause, that ye should think no default in me for remembering in the said matters.

And now of late, I remembering him of the same matter, inquired if he had moved the king's highness therein, and he answered me that he had felt and moved the king therein,

[1] ["The matters" is omitted in Fenn's translation.]

[2] Henry Viscount Bourchier, Lord Treasurer of England, was created Earl of Essex in 1461, in the first year of the reign of Edward IV. He was a man of great knowledge and application to business, and at different times filled most of the great offices of state. His death happened in 1483. He was uncle to the king by his marriage with a sister of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, the king's father.

rehearsing the king's answer therein, how that when he had moved the king in the said manor of Dedham, beseeching him to be your good lord therein, considering the service and true part[1] that ye have done and owe to him, and in especial the right that ye have thereto; he said he would be your good lord therein, as he would be to the poorest man in England, he would hold with you in your right, and as for favour he will not be understood that he shall show favour more to one man than to another, not to one in England.

And as for the bill, copied of the court roll, when he moved to him of it, he smiled, and said that such a bill there was, saying that ye would have oppressed sundry of your countrymen of worshipful men, and therefore he kept it still, nevertheless he said he should look it up in haste, and ye should have it.

Baronners undertook to me twice or thrice that he should so have remembered his lord and master that I should have had it within two or three days; he is often times absent, and therefore I have it not yet, when I can get it I shall send it you, and of the king's mouth, his name that take it him.[2]

I send you home Peacock again, he is not for me, God send grace that he may do you good service, that by estimation is not likely; ye shall have knowledge afterward how he hath demeaned him here with me; I would, saving your displeasure, that ye were delivered of him, for he shall never do you profit nor worship.

I suppose ye understand that the money that I had of you at London may not endure with me till that the king go into Wales and come again, for I understand it shall be long ere he come again, wherefore I have sent to London to mine uncle Clement to get an hundred shillings of Christopher Hanson your servant, and send it me by my said servant, and mine harness with it, which I left at London to make clean.

I beseech you not to be displeased with it, for I could make none other chevisance (*contract*),[3] but I should have borrowed it of a strange man, some of my fellows, which I suppose should not like you and ye heard of it another time. I am in surety where as[4] I shall have another man in the stead of Peacock.

My Lord of Essex saith he will do as much for you as for any esquire in England, and Baronners his man telleth me, saying, "your father is much beholden to my lord, for he loveth him well;" Bernners[5] moved me once, and said that ye must needs do somewhat for my lord and his; and I said I wist well that ye would do for him that lay in your power, and he said that there was a little money betwixt you and a gentleman of Essex called Dyrward, saying that there is as much between my said lord and the said gentleman, of the which money he desireth your part.

It is talked here how that ye and Howard should have striven together on the Shire day,[6] and one of Howard's men should have stricken you twice with a dagger, and so ye should have been hurt but for a good doublet that ye had on at that time, blessed be God that ye had it on! No more I write to your good fatherhood at this time, but Almighty God have you in his keeping, and send you victory of your enemies, and worship increasing to your life's ending.

Written at Lewes,[7] on St. Bartholomew's even.

By your servant and elder son,
JOHN PASTON.

Lewes, in Sussex.
23 August, 1461 or 1462.
1 or 2 E. IV.

[1] [Penn has *heart* by mistake.]
[2] [That is,—and out of or from the king's mouth, his name that took it to him.]

[3] [Original, *cheysaunce*—perhaps choosance or choice, though chevisance may be right. *But* is so continually used in the sense of except that an explanation at every time of its occurrence is unnecessary.]
[4] [I am in surety where I can procure, &c.]
[5] [So spelt in this instance in the original.]
[6] This was probably occasioned by some election or other dispute which arose at the county court.
[7] The date of this letter is, in some measure, ascertained by the place from which it is written, as the king in the summer of 1462 took a progress through several parts of his kingdom; namely, to Canterbury, Sandwich, Lewes, &c., and so along the coast to Southampton, from whence he proceeded to the marshes of Wales.

LETTER CLXXXIII.—(XV. vol. iv. p. 53.)

[The economy of the royal household is incidentally shown in this letter. It appears that not all the followers of the court were provided for at the king's expense, and that the cost of attending the king in his journeys was greater than when he was resident in London. The quarrel with Howard is again alluded to.]

To his right reverend and worshipful brother, John Paston.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful brother, I recommend me to your good brotherhood, desiring to hear of your welfare and good prosperity, the which I pray God increase to his pleasure and your heart's ease, certifying you that I have spoken with John Russe, and Playters spoke with him, both *(also)*[1] on Friday before St. Bartholomew; he told us of Howard's guiding, which made us right sorry, till we heard the conclusion that ye had none harm.

Also I understand by William Peacock that my nephew had knowledge thereof also upon Saturday next before St. Bartholomew in the king's house; notwithstanding upon the same day Playters and I wrote letters unto him, rehearsing all the matter, for cause if there were any questions moved to him thereof, that he should tell the truth, in case that the questions were moved by any worshipful man, and named my Lord Bourchier,[2] for my Lord Bourchier was with the king at that time.

I feel by William Peacock that my nephew is not yet verily acquainted in the king's house, nor with the officers of the king's house; he is not taken as none [*one*] of that house, for the cooks be not charged to serve him, nor the sewer to give him no dish, for the sewer will not take no men no dishes till they be commanded by the controller; also he is not acquainted with nobody but with Wykes,[3] and Wykes had told him that he would bring him to the king, but he hath not yet done so; wherefore it were best for him to take his leave and come home till ye had spoken with somebody to help him forth, for he is not bold enough to put forth himself; but then I considered that if he should now come home, the king would think that when he should do him any service somewhere,[4] that then ye would have him home, the which should cause him not to be had in favour; and also men would think that he were put out of service. Also William Peacock telleth me that his money is spent, and not riotously, but wisely and discreetly, for the costs is greater in the king's house when he rideth then ye wend it had been, as William Peacock can tell you; and therefore we must get him one hundred shillings at the least, as by William Peacock's saying, and yet that will be too little, and I wot well we cannot get forty pence of Christopher Hanson, so I shall be fain to lend it him of mine own silver; if I knew verily your intent were that he should come home I would send him none; therefore I will do as me thinketh ye should be best pleased, and that me thinketh is to send him the silver; therefore I pray you (*as*) hastily as ye may send me again five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and the remanent I trow I shall get upon Christopher Hanson and Loket. I pray you send me it as hastily as ye may for I shall leave myself right bare, and I pray you send me a letter how ye will that he shall be demeaned. Written on Tuesday after St. Bartholomew, &c. Christus vos conservet! By

CLEMENT PASTON.

clement paston

August, about 1461 or 1462.
1 or 2 E. IV.

[1] [We know of no authority for such a translation of *both*. We think it means *both of us* or *both together*. The context supports this view, as it adds that he (Russe) told us (C. Paston and Playters) of Howard's guiding, &c.]

[2] William Viscount Bourchier, eldest son of Henry Bourchier, who was created Earl of Essex in June 1461: he was cousin to Edward IV. and died in the life-time of his father.

[3] John Wykes was an usher of the king's chamber, and a friend and cousin of J. Paston's.

[4] [Fenn translates "any service, it were," &c. The original is "ony s^rvie s^o wer yt," &c.]

LETTER CLXXXIV.—(XVI. vol. iv. p. 59.)

[This letter chiefly relates to personal and private matters; but the notice of Agnes Paston is remarkable and characteristic. She everywhere appears to be a strong-willed and energetic woman.]

To the right reverend and worshipful Sir, and my good master, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Sir, I recommend me to your good mastership, praying you to weet that I was at Blake's and spake with his wife, and she saith he was not at home this three weeks, he rideth up the country to take accounts of bales, and that this day sev'night he should have sate in Caister by you upon accounts, and from thence he should have ridden to Lynn, and that he shall be at home on Monday at night next coming; wherefore I have left my errand with her; but she saith that he shall not mown coming (*be able to come*) to you, for my lady have sent for him in great haste, both by a letter and by a token, to come to her as hastily as he may; notwithstanding she shall do the errand to him.

As for Yelverton I did a good feel to inquire of James Skinner when the said Yelverton should go to London; he said not this sev'night, he could not tell what day till he had spoken with his son, his son should come to him ere his master should ride; I shall inquire more at Walsingham; and for God's love be not too long from London, for men say there, as I have been (*informed*) that my Lord of Gloucester should have Caister, and there is great noise of this revel that was done in Suffolk by Yelverton and Jenney; and your well-willers think that if they might prevail in this, they would attempt you in others; but cease their power and malice, and preserve you from all evil, and at the reverence of God let some interposition go a-twixt you and my mistress your mother ere ye go to London, and all that ye do shall speed the better, for she is set on great malice, and every man that she speaketh with, knoweth her heart, and it is like to be a foul noise (*over*) all the country without it be soon ceased.

Also, Sir, it is told me that my Lord of Norfolk is coming to Framlingham, and that ye be greatly commended in his household, therefore it were well done, me seemeth, that ye spake with him.

The Holy Trinity keep you. Written at Norwich, the Thursday after St. Matthew.

Your poor priest,
JAMES GLOYS.

Norwich,
Thursday, 24th of September,
1461. 1 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXXV.—(VIII. vol. i. p. 211.)

The writer in the former part of this letter seems to accuse his master Paston of delay in fulfilling the trusts in Sir John Fastolf's will, to whom he was executor.

To my full worshipful, special good master, John Paston, Esq., abiding at Norwich.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, and some time my most special good master, I recommend me unto your good mastership, with all my poor service, if it may in any wise suffice; and farthermore, Sir, I beseech you, now being in your country, where ye may daily call unto you my master Sir Thomas Howes, once to remember my poor matter; and by your discretions to take such a direction therein, and so to conclude, as may be to your discharge and to my furtherance, according to the will of him that is passed unto God, whose soul I pray Jesu pardon! for truly, Sir, there was in him no fault, but in me only, if it be not as I have remembered your mastership afore this time. For truly, Sir, I dare say I should have had as special and as good a master of you as any poor man, as I am, within England should have had of a worshipful man, as you are, if ye had never meddled the goods of my master Fastolf; and as much ye would have done and laboured for me in my right, if it had been in the hands of any other man than of yourself only. But, I trust in God, at your next coming, to have an answer such as I shall be content with; and if it may be so, I am and shall be your servant in that I can or may, that knoweth

our Lord Jesus, whom I beseech save, and send you a good end in all your matters, to your pleasure and worship everlasting. Amen. Written at London, the 4th day of October.

As for tidings, the king will be at London within three days next coming, and all the castles and holds both in South Wales and in North Wales are given and yielded up into the kind's hand; and the Duke of Exeter[1] and the Earl of Pembroke[2] are fled and taken [*to*] the mountains, and divers lords with great puissance are after them. And the most part of gentlemen, and men of worship are come in to the king, and have grace of all Wales. The Duke of Somerset,[3] the Lord Hungerford,[4] Robert Whityngham, and other four or five esquires, are come into Normandy out of Scotland, and as yet they stand strait under arrest; and as merchants that are come late thence say, they are like to be deemed and judged prisoners. My Lord Wenlock,[5] Sir John Cley, and the Dean of St. Severin's have abode at Calais these three weeks, and yet are there, abiding a safe conduct, going upon an embassy to the French king.[6] And Sir Walter Blount,[7] treasurer of Calais, with a great fellowship of soldiers of Calais, and many other men of the marches, have lain, and yet do, at a siege afore the castle of Hammes, by-side Calais, and daily make great war, either party to other.

Item, I send unto you a copy of a letter that was taken upon the sea, made by the Lord Hungerford and Whityngham.

Item, we shall have a great embassy out of Scotland in all haste of lords.

At your commandment, and servant,

HENRY WYNDESORE.

London,
4th of October, 1461. 1. E. IV.

LETTER CLXXXVI. (IX. vol. i. p. 247.)

This copy is written by Henry Windsor, and having the same paper-mark with the foregoing original letter, is that which was sent with it to his master Paston, to whom it is directed. We here see the suspicious state the adherents of the queen were in abroad, though in the kingdom of her cousin germain. What a fall for poor King Henry, from a throne to the attendance of four men and a boy.

To the Queen of England, in Scotland.

MADAM, please it your good God, we have since our coming hither written to your highness thrice; the first we sent by Bruges, to be sent to you by the first vessel that went into Scotland; the other two letters were sent from Dieppe, the one, by the carvel in the which we came; and the other, in another vessel; but, madam, all was one thing in substance, of putting you in knowledge of the king[8] your uncle's death, whom God assoyl (*pardon*), and how we stood arrested, and do yet. But on Tuesdey next we trust and understand we shall up to the king[9] your cousin germain. His commissaries, at the first of our tarrying, took all our letters and writings, and bear them up to the king; leaving my Lord of Somerset in keeping at (*the*) castle of Arques; and my fellow Whityngham and me (for we had safe conduct) in the town of Dieppe, where we are yet. But on Tuesday next we understand that it pleaseth the said king's highness that we shall come to his presence: and are charged to bring us up Monsieur de Cressell, now bailiff of Canse,[10] and Monsieur de la Mot.

Madam, ferth (*fear*) you not, but be of good comfort, and beware that ye adventure not your person, nor my lord the Prince, by

[1] Henry Holland; he married lady Anne, sister to Edward IV., but continued firm to the interest of the House of Lancaster.

[2] Jasper Tudor, of Hatfield, half-brother to Henry VI.; he was afterwards Duke of Bedford.

[3] Henry Beaufort, he was beheaded in 1463, after the battle of Hexham.

[4] Robert, Lord Hungerford, was beheaded in 1463.

[5] John Lord Wenlock left the York party, and joined that of Lancaster, but neglecting to come up in time at the battle of Tewkesbury in 1471, Edmund Duke of Somerset cleft him down with a battle-axe.

[6] Lewis XI.

[7] He was created Lord Montjoy in 1465, and obtained part of the estates of the attainted Thomas Courtney, Earl of Devonshire.

[8] Charles VII., king of France, died 22nd of July, 1461, aged 60.

[9] Lewis XI. king of France.

[10] [Probably Cannes.]

the sea, till ye have other word from us; in less than (*unless that*) your person cannot be sure there as ye are, and that extreme necessity drive you thence. And for God's sake (*let*) the king's highness be advised the same; for as we be informed the Earl of March [1] is into Wales by land, and hath sent his navy thither by sea. And madam, think verily, we shall not sooner be delivered but that we will come straight to you, without death take us by the way; the which we trust he will not, till we see the king and you peaceable again in your realm; the which we beseech God soon to see, and to send you that your highness desireth. Written at Dieppe, the 30th day of August.

Your true subjects and liege men,

HUNGERFORD.[2]

WHITYNGHAM.[3]

Dieppe.
30th of August, 1461.
1. E. IV.

At the bottom of the copy of the letter is added :—

These are the names of those men that are in Scotland with the queen.

The King Harry is at Kirkhowbre (*Kirkcudbright*) with four men and a child.

Queen Margaret is at Edinburgh and her son.

The Lord Roos and his son.[4]
John Ormond.
Will'm Taylboys.
S^r. John Fortescue.
S^r. Thos Fyndern.
S^r. Edmund Hampden.[3]
S^r. Henry Roos.
John Courtney.
Myrfyn of Kent.
Waynesford of London.
Thos Thompson of Guynes.
Thos Brampton of Guynes.
John Audeley of Guynes.
Langheyn of Ireland.
Thos Philip of Ipswich.
Danson.
Thos Burnby.
Borret of Sussex.
S^r. John Welpdale.
Mr. Rog^r Clerk of London.
John Retford late Coubitt.
Giles Seintlowe.
John Hawt.

LETTER CLXXXVII.—(X. vol. i. p. 251.)

I have given this as the contents of a paper which accompanies the two foregoing letters, but how far they merit any regard I cannot pretend to say. The writer seems to doubt the truth of many of the assertions, as he adds to almost every one of them "as they say." It relates to the return of the Duke of Somerset, &c. from France into Scotland, to join Queen Margaret, and must have been written in or about 1462.

Memorandum. This is the confession of sixteen Frenchmen with the master, taken at Sheringham (in Norfolk) the third week of Lent.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, and let you weet, that I have been at Sheringham and examined the Frenchmen, to the number of sixteen with the master; and they tell that the Duke of Somerset is into Scotland, and they say the Lord Hungerford was on Monday last past afore Sheringham into Scotland ward in a kervel (*carvel*) of Dieppe, no great power with him, nor with the said duke neither. And they say that the Duke of Burgoyn[5] is poisoned and not like to recover.

And as for powers to be gathered against our welfare; they say there should come into [*the*] Seine 200 great forstages[6] out of Spain from the king there;[7] and 300 ships from the Duke of Bretagne[8] with the navy of France, but they be not yet assembled, nor

[1] Edward IV. king of England.
[2] See note to Letter clxxxv.
[3] Sir Robert Whitynghan and Sir Edward Hampden were slain at the battle of Tewkesbury in 1471.
[4] Thomas Lord Roos and his son Edmund: the former was beheaded in 1463, after the battle of Hexham.
[5] Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. [This rumour was incorrect.]
[6] Large ships were ships with forestages or forecastles.
[7] Henry IV. king of Spain, died in 1474.
[8] Francis II. last Duke of Bretagne, died in 1488.

victual there purveyed, as they say, nor men. And the king of France[1] is into Spain on pilgrimage with few horse as they say; what the purpose is they cannot tell certain, &c.

In haste at Norwich.

The king of France hath committed the rule of Bourdeaux unto the merchants of the town, and the browd[2] that be therein to be at their wages; and like as Calais is a staple of wool here in England, so is that made a staple of wine.

John Fermer prisoner saith, one John Giles, a clerk that was with the Earl of Oxford, which was some time in King Harry's house, was a privy secretary with the Earl of Oxford; and if any writing were made by the said earl, the said Giles knew thereof in this great matter.

Norwich,
March , 1461-2.
2 E. IV.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.—(XVII. vol. iv. p. 63.)

John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, succeeded his father in 1461, 1 E. IV. and I should suppose came to age very soon after, for, in November 1462, he by the king's command was to keep his Christmas at his castle of Holt in Denbighshire, when he appears to have been married, and was then most probably past his twenty-first year. This letter might therefore be written on the 12th of October, 1461, and at latest on the same day in 1462. We are here acquainted with the parade and attendance expected by the nobility from their retainers and vassals on the delivery of their lands, and on their taking possession of offices.

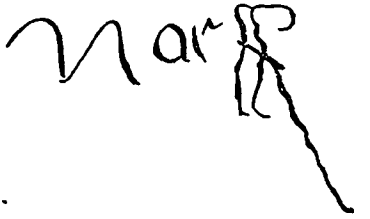
To our trusty and entirely beloved servant, John Paston, Esq.

THE DUKE OF NORFOLK.

RIGHT well-beloved servant, I greet you heartily well, certifying that we shall be at full age on Friday next coming, wherefore, well counselled by the lords of our counsel, and other of our counsel, that ye, one of our servants of household with others, be with us at London on Friday or Saturday next coming at the furthest, to accompany us then to our worship, for we shall have then livery of our lands and offices; and that ye fail us not as ye will have our good lordship in time coming, and also that ye do warn our feedmen[3] and servants, such as be nigh to you, that they be there then in our livery. Written the 12th day of October.

NORFOLK.[4]

Monday, 12th of October, 1461. 1 E. IV.



LETTER CLXXXIX.—(XVIII. vol. iv. p. 65.)

Though this letter has neither address nor subscription, it appears to have been written to John Paston in the beginning of Edward the Fourth's reign, and the business it contains seems to be relative to Sir John Fastolf's affairs and will. Thomas Howes was parson of Blofield from about 1460 to 1471, and his cheve-day or thriving-day, I should suppose means the day on which he received the profits of his living; Saint Andrew's day being now a usual time for the payment of compositions for tythes. The writer of this letter was a friend of J. Paston, and from the advice which he here gives him, may be supposed one who knew mankind.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful master, I recommend me unto you, &c. the cause of my writing is this, I was at Blofield on Saint Andrew's day (30 *November*) with the parson, and he under-

[1] Lewis XI. king of France, died in 1483.

[2] This word is imperfect in the original paper, perhaps it means they bruit.

[3] Feedmen were those who held lands by an acknowledgment of any superiority to a higher lord.

[4] John Mowbray was the last Duke of Norfolk of that name, and married Elizabeth, daughter of that renowned warrior John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury: he died suddenly at Framlingham Castle, in Suffolk, on Wednesday the 17th of January, 1475.

stood none other but that I came to see his mastership, for it was his cheve day; and there I moved unto him of the land in Sochewerk (*Southwark*), how I heard say when I was in Suffolk that Jenney made his avaunt that he had given you and him a chop [*exchange*] of twenty pound of land; and incontinent he told me all the matter better than I could tell him; and as I could understand in him by my simple wit that he was of knowledge of all the matter, for he said that Yelverton came down from the Bench, and plete (*pleaded*) the matter, and for cause ye were so laches (*negligent*), and came not in time, the matter yede (*went*) amiss, and so I understood by him that he is disposed to excuse Yelverton in all matters rather than you, but nevertheless make good cheer to the parson as though ye understood that he were your friend till time ye have your intent, but beware and trust him not, but make you so strong in lordship and in the law, that ye reek not (*care not*) much whether he be good or bad, &c.

Item, ye be much beholden unto Thomas Greene and to Edmund Wydeville, brother to Hugh Fenn, for they report much worship of your mastership in all matters, and that causes the substance of the town to owe you service, and be well disposed unto your mastership, and that understand I every day; and if it please you, when we parted at Norwich in your place, ye said unto me ye would somewhat do by my simple advice; and this is mine advice, that in any wise ye make Hugh Fenn and Thomas Greene on your counsel, if ye can find in your heart, for I dare say as I hear and understand that they owe you right good will and service, for a man may hear by the half what the whole meaneth; and therefore for God's love remember you well in this matter, for and (*if*) it stood on my life I would do as I advise you, &c.

Item, for our Lord's love go through with William Worcester, and also please Chrewys as ye think in your heart best for to do, for it is a common proverb "A man must sometimes set a candle before the devil;" and therefore though it be not aldermost meet and profitable, yet "of two harms the least is to be taken."

Item, ye shall understand that the parson told me that they were summoned to come for the probate of the testament at conversion of Saint Paul (25 *January*), and therefore I would advise you in any wise that ye should understand the matter wisely ere ye come home, for I suppose that Yelverton and he is confederate and accord together.

Item, when I was at Blofield with the parson, there came Robert Fyrass (*Ferrers?*) to him, saying that he is compelled by the king's commissioners to have harness after his degree, and that the parson sent him to my mistress that she should deliver him harness, and I understand she will not till ye come home, but ye shall understand it is an alms deed to do him good, understanding his necessity and need that he stand in, and also understanding that he was kinsman to my master, and it is a common proverb, "A man should keep from the blind and give it to his kind," and every man will say well thereof, the more because he is a gentleman, and of his kin, and in great penury; and therefore for the love of God remember such matters. No more at this time, but God have you in his keeping both body and soul, and speed you in your matters as well as I would ye should do.

December, or January, between 1460 and 1462.
1 and 2 E. IV.

LETTER CXC.—(XIX. vol. iv. p. 69.)

At this time Henry VI. was in Scotland, and his queen in France, soliciting assistance from Lewis XI. though with little success; the report therefore of an invasion with so large an army could have no real foundation; it was, however, the news of the day, and alarmed the friends of Edward, On the seal of this letter is the impression of the bear, the well-known cognizance of the Earl of Warwick. It shows both the popularity and power which this great peer had at this time when his friends used this device of his on their seals.

To my right worshipful Sir and master, mine master, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful Sir and master, I recommend me to you, and please you that the church of Drayton is or shall be resigned in haste into the bishop's hands by Sir John Bullock, de-

siring you heartily that ye like I may have the presentation of the next avoidance for a nephew of mine, called Sir Reynold Spendelowe, which I trust your mastership will agree to make in your name and mine as was last, &c.[1] And, Sir, please you also that I have had divers communications with Worcester since Christmas, and I feel by him utterly that he will not appoint in other form than to have the lands of Fairchilds, and other lands in Drayton, to the sum of ten marks (*6l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) of you properly, beside that that he desireth of mine master, whom God assoil, which matter I remit to your noble discretion.

And as for answer of the bills that I have, I have been so sekelele (*sickly*) since Christmas that I might not yet done them, but I shall in all haste, wherein ye may excuse you by me if ye please till the next term, at which time all shall be answered by God's grace, who preserve you and send you the accomplishment of your desires, &c.

Item, Sir, please your mastership, it was letten me weet in right secret wise that a puissance is ready to arrive in three parts of this land, by the mean of King Harry and the queen that was, and by the Duke (*of*) Somerset and others, of six score thousand men, and their day, if wind and weather had served them, should have been here soon upon Candlemas; at Trent to London ward, they should have been by Candlemas, or soon after, one part of them, and another part coming from Wales, and the third from Jersey and Guernsey, wherefore it is well done ye inform mine Lord Warwick, that he may speak to the king that good provision be had for withstanding their malicious purpose and evil will, which God grant we may overcome them, and so we should I doubt not if we were all one; there be many meddlers, and they be best cherished which would hurt much if these come too, as God defend, &c.

THOMAS HOWES.

February, 1461-2.
1 E. IV.

LETTER CXCI.—(XX. vol. iv. p. 73.)

The persons here mentioned to have been summoned to attend the king under his writ of Privy Seal were at this time I suppose suspected not only of concerning themselves in the affairs of their late Sovereign Henry VI. but of acting for his interest, particularly Berney and Rough, or such violent proceedings as that of raising the county to apprehend them would scarcely have been commanded: it might however be for some other cause. If William Yelverton had offended, he soon made his peace, for he now was, and continued to be, a justice of the King's Bench. This embassy from Philip Duke of Burgundy fixes the date of this letter to the year 1461-2, as in the beginning of this year his ambassadors arrived.

To my most reverend and worshipful master, my master John Paston, be this delivered.

PLEASETH it your good mastership to understand that I have received a bill of John Boteler, which speaketh of your hay at Hellesdon, and of your barley in other places, but I understand not what ye would I should do therein; nevertheless I shall do make (*have it made*) ready; and as for your hay I shall tell you when I come home; and as for money at Hellesdon I can none get, and at Swainsthorp I have taken four marks (*2l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*)

Item, as for tidings, the sessions shall be at Thetford on Wednesday next coming, where I understand Master Berney will be with much people, because there is come to him a privy seal that he should be with the king within six days (*after*) that the privy seal was delivered him, which he cannot do, for the sixth day is to-morrow; there is one come to Felbrigg, to William Yelverton one other, and to Robert Rough another, and none of them will go to the king; and the undersheriff told me that there is come a commis-

[1] The following extracts from the Institution books in the registry of the Bishop of Norwich, ascertain the date of this letter.

Draiton.

"Reg. xi. 124, 29 January, 1460-1. Johannes Bullock ad præsentationem Johis Paston arm. et Tho. Howys Capellani."

"Reg. xi. 131. 15 March 1461-2. Johēs Flourdew ad præsentationem eorundem."

It appears from hence that John Bullock resigned the living of Drayton in 1461-2, and on that the 15th of March John Flowerdow was presented thereto and not Sr Reynold Spendelowe.

sion down to his master, that in case they come not up to the king by their privy seals, that then he rear the country, and take them, and bring them to the king wheresoever he be.

Item, James Gresham telleth me the same, and as for tidings from London we hear none, but that John Colman telleth me that if Berney or Robert Rough come up they are like to die.

There be come to London ambassadors from the Duke of Burgundy, which caused the king to speed him the rather to London.

Item, as for any new assizes at Thetford there is none but that hath hanged this five years, as the sheriff telleth me.

I was purposed to be at home this night till I had your bill, which causeth me to ride on to Drayton for divers things, &c. Almighty Jesu preserve you.

Written at Norwich, the second Monday of clean Lent.

Your poor beadsman and servant,

RICHARD CALLE.

Norwich,
Monday, 15 March, 1461-2.
2 E. IV.

LETTER CXCII.—(XXI. vol. iv. p. 77.)

It appears from this letter that the king in person attended at the assizes in Cambridge, during the time that his judges transacted the business of the Court. The extortions, and other acts of oppression, done by the sheriffs, &c., of counties were at this time very great, and loudly called for reformation. On the back of this letter is written the following memorandum: "Justice Yelverton boasteth of cõmendacon had at the king's hands."

To my right singular master, J. Paston, Esq. in haste, &c.

AFTER due recommendation, please it your mastership to weet, Master Yelverton, justice, said in the sessions that the king should keep his Easter at Bury, and from thence come into this country, and see such riots as have been in this country punished in such form as happily some should hang by the neck; and he told what thank he had of the king at Cambridge, for cause he declared so well the charge of extortion done by sheriffs and other officers, &c., for the which declaration the king took him by the hand, and said he cowde (*owed*) him great thanks, and prayed him so to do in this country, &c.

In haste, at Norwich, the Wednesday next before the Annunciation.

Your poor JAMES GRESHAM.

Norwich,
Wednesday, 24 March, 1461-2. 2 E. IV.
But this date is not certain.

LETTER CXCIII.—(XI. vol. i. p. 253.)

This letter appears to have been written the year after the accession of Edward IV., as in the February preceding this letter John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and Aubrey his son, were beheaded. The informations then given might probably make it necessary to have many of their dependants and servants taken into custody and detained in prison. The attention of the Paston's, father and son, to the writer of this letter, who appears to have been a confidential servant of Edward, seems to be directed to the obtaining of his favour with the king on their behalf. Lavenham, in Suffolk, had been in the possession of the De Veres from the reign of Henry I. The Church there is a noble and elegant structure, and was built by them and the family of Spring.

To my right trusty and well-beloved friend, John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful and mine entirely well-beloved friend, I recommend me unto you, heartily thanking you of your great present of fish, and of the fellowship that my cousin your son showed unto me at Norwich, proposing by the grace of God to deserve it unto you in time to come, in such place as I may do for you. Desiring you specially, whereas a tenant of mine of Lavenham, called John Fermor, is seized and arrested within the town of Yarmouth, because he dwelled with the Earl of Oxford's son, and proposed to have passed the sea without licence, and standeth out of the conceit of much people, I would desire you that ye would write to the bailiffs of Yarmouth to deliver the said John Fermor to my servant John Brenerigg, bringer of this, with an officer of the said town, to be carried

unto the king's castle of Rising at my cost; there to be examined of certain articles, which I may not disclose till I have spoken with the king's highness. Praying you to write to the said bailiffs that I shall be their sufficient discharge against the king, desiring you to give credence to the bringer hereof, as my very trust is in you.

Written at Lavenham, the 25th day of March.

Your true and faithful friend, having no blame for my good will,

JOHN WYKES,

Usher of the King's Chamber.

Lavenham,
Thursday, 25th of March, 1462. 2 E. IV.

LETTER CXCIV.—(XXII. vol. iv. p. 79.)

This letter was most probably written in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV. after the executors of Sir J. Fastolf had disagreed amongst themselves; and would scarcely have been worth preserving, but as it mentions 'A Chronicle of Jerusalem,' and 'A History of the Valiant Acts of Sir John Fastolf.' This Bussard appears to have been one of those persons who were employed to transcribe books before the art of printing reached England, and perhaps was likewise concerned in drawing up, as well as in writing, the account of Sir John Fastolf's exploits in France.

Unto my master, Paston, be this letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you, and if it like you I have spoken with Bussard, and demanded him if he had any evidence, deeds, or copies, or any other evidence of any place, or of any livelihood that longg[t] (*belongeth*) unto my master, and (*he*) saith nay, by his faith and by his truth, for if he had he would send them unto you with a good will; for he saith it should do him none ease, (*they would be of no use to him*). And, Sir, if it please you, I asked him if he knew any evidence that he had delivered unto William Worcester, bill, or deeds, or any other evidence, that should belong unto any purchase, or of any livelihood unto my master's, and he saith nay truly, for he saith the last time that he wrote unto William Worcester it was before Midsummer and then he wrote 'A Chronicle of Jerusalem,' and the jornes (*journes, valiant exploits*) that my master (*Fastolf*) did while he was in France, that God on his soul have mercy! And he saith that this drew more than twenty whazerys (*wases, bundles?*) of paper, and this writing (*he*) delivered unto William Worcester and none other, nor knoweth not of none other by his faith.

By your man,

JOHN DAVY.

Most probably written after 1460, and in the beginning of the reign of *E. IV.*

LETTER CXCV.—(XXIII. vol iv. p. 81.)

We have here an exact picture of the times, and are furnished with the steps taken to keep and defend landed property. Possession seemed to depend entirely upon the number of men the possessor was able to bring together, at a short notice, to resist such a fellowship as his adversary brought to dispossess him. The influence of the great, however, extended far, and if they interfered the others were obliged to submit. This seems to have been the case here, as the heads of both parties were retainers of the Duke of Norfolk. Had they been under different nobles, perhaps a local civil commotion would have been stirred up, and many lives have been lost before the contest had been decided. It is difficult to ascertain the exact year in which this letter was written. I think it must have been in the beginning of king Edward's reign, but I am not certain. [These remarks of Fenn are much too general. In cases of disputed right, as we have before remarked, it was and is not uncommon to have recourse to force as the quickest means of obtaining a legal decision. No doubt the influence of the rich and powerful was great either for good or evil, but the present letter, while it shows the good effects of the Duke of Norfolk's interference, proves that neither party considered themselves "obliged to submit" farther than their own interests prompted them. "A local civil commotion" is wholly gratuitous. Landed as well as other property appears on the whole to have been sufficiently secure and consequently effectually guarded. We shall have to speak of this subject more at length in the subsequent account of the *siege* of Caister.]

To my right reverend and worshipful father, John Paston, be this delivered.

AFTER all humble and most due recommendation, as lowly as I can, I beseech you of your blessing; please it you to have knowledge that as on Sunday next before

Michaelmas day as my mother came from London ward, she came homeward by Cotton, and she sent for me to Hellesdon to come to her thither, and so I have been in the place ever since: and as soon as Michaelmas day was passed I began to distrain the tenants, and gathered some silver, as much, I trow, as will pay for our costs, and yet I keep here right a good fellowship, and more were promised me, which yet came not to me, whereby I was near deceived; for when Debenham heard say how that I began to gather silver, he raised many men within one day and an half to the number of three hundred men, as I was credibly ascertained by a yeoman of the chamber of my lord's (*of Norfolk*) that oweth me good will, which yeoman, as soon as he had seen their fellowship, rode strait to my lord and informed him of it; and also he informed my lord how that I had gathered another great fellowship, which fellowship he named more than we were by one hundred and an half, and yet more; and he said unto my lord and my lady, and to their counsel, that without that my lord took a direction in the matter, that there were like to be done great harm on both our parts, which were a great disworship to my lord, considering how that he taketh us both for his men, and so we be known well enough; upon which information, and disworship to my lord, that twain of his men should debate so near him, contrary to the king's peace, considered of my lord and my lady and their counsel, my lord sent for me and Sir Gilbert Debenham to come to him to Framlingham both; and as it fortuned well, my mother came to me to Cotton not half an hour before that the messenger came to me from my lord, which was late upon Tuesday last past at night, and the next day on the morning I rode to my lord to Framlingham, and so did Sir Gilbert also; and as soon as we were come we were sent for to come to my lord, and when we came to my lord, he desired of us both that we should neither gather no fellowship, but such men as we had gathered that we should send them home again, and that the court should be continued into the time that my lord, or such as he would assign, had spoken both with you, and Yelverton, and Jenney; and that one indifferent man, chosen by us both should be assigned to keep the place into the time that ye and they were spoken with.

And then I answered my lord and said, how that at that time I had my master within the manor of Cotton, which was my mother, and into the time that I had spoken with her I could give none answer; and so my lord sent Richard Fulmerston bearer hereof to my mother this day for an answer, which answer he should bring to my lord to London; for my lord rode to London ward as yesterday, and the sooner because he trusted to have a good end of this matter and all others betwixt you, which he taketh for a great worship to him, and a great advantage both, and (*if*) he could bring this matter about, for then he would trust to have your service, all which were to him great treasure and advantage.

And this was the answer that my mother and I gave him, that at the instance of my lord and my lady we would do thus much as for to put the court in continuance, and no more to receive of the profits of the manor than we had, and had distressed for, till into the time that she and I had word again from my lord and you; if so were that they would neither make entries nor distrain the tenants, nor keep no court, more than we would do, and we told Richard Fulmerston that this my mother and I did at the instance and great request of my lord, because my lord intended peace, which reasonable we would not be against, and yet we said we knew well that we should have no thank of you when ye knew of it, without it were because we did it at my lord's instance; but before this answer we had received as much silver, full nigh, as Richard Calle sent us books of for to gather it by; and as for the possession of the place, we told him that we would keep it, and Sir Gilbert agreed, so that Yelverton and Jenney would do the same, for it was time for him to say so, for my lord told him that he would set him fast by the feet else, to be sure of him, that he should make none insurrections into the time that my lord came again from London.

I ween, and so doth my mother both, that this appointment was made in good time, for I was deceived of better than an hundred

men and an half that I had promise of to have come to me when I sent for them, this promise had I before that I sent to you the last letter the day after St. Michael. Jenney heard say that I kept Cotton, and he rode to Nacton, and there held a court, and received the profits of the manor.

I beseech you that I may have knowledge in haste from you how ye will that I be demeaned in this matter and in all others, and I shall apply me to fulfil your intent in them to my power by the grace of God, whom I beseech have you in guiding, and send you your heart's desire. Written at Hemnale's Hall, in Cotton, the Thursday next before, St. Faith.

My mother recommendeth her to you, and prayeth you to hold her excused that she writeth not to you at this time, for she may have no leisure; the bearer hereof shall inform you whether Jenney will agree to this appointment or not, I think he dare do none otherwise. Your son and lowly servant,

JOHN PASTON.

Hemnale's Hall, Cotton, Suffolk,
Thursday, October.
Early in the reign of Edward IV., but exact year uncertain.

LETTER CXCVI.—(XXIV. vol. iv. p. 89.

From several of the letters contained in these volumes it appears that proposals for a marriage often originated from the friends of the lady, not that she had any prepossession in favour of the gentleman, but because her friends thought such a match might be proper in respect to worldly matters. This seems to have been the case here, and the grandmother of the young lady wishes the friends of Sir John Cley to be spoken to on this subject, thinking that his son's livelihood would be a sufficient one, and that a marriage might be concluded as times now go, (for that must be the meaning of the words "now in thys world,") on reasonable terms; this marriage however never took effect.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; please you to weet that I was at Norwich this week to purvey such things as needeth me against this winter; and I was at my mother's, and while I was there, there came in one Wrothe, a kinsman of Elizabeth Clere's, and he sey (*saw*) your daughter and praised her to my mother, and said that she was a goodly young woman; and my mother prayed him for to get for her one good marriage if he knew any; and he said he knew one should be of a 300 marks (200*l.*) by year, the which is Sir John Cley's son, that is chamberlayn with my Lady of York,[1] and he is of age of eighteen years old; if ye think it be for to be spoken of, my mother thinks that it should be got for less money now in this world than it should be hereafter, either that one, or some other good marriage.

Item, I spake with Master John Estgate for Pykering's matter after your intent of the matter of the letter that ye sent home, and he said to me he should write to you how he had done therein, and so he sent you a letter, the which was sent you by John Wodehouse's[2] man with other letters.

Ys for answer (*of*) other matters, Daubeney telleth me he wrote to you. I beseech Almighty God have you in his keeping. Written at Caister, the Sunday next after St. Martin.

By your
MARGARET PASTON.

Caister, Sunday, November,
between 1461 and 1465.
1 and 5 E. IV.

[1] Cecily, Duchess of York, widow of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and mother of Edward IV. She died in an advanced age, at her castle of Berkhamstead, in May, 1495, and was buried near her husband, in the choir of the collegiate church of Fotheringhay in Northamptonshire.

[2] John Wodehouse, Esq., of Kimberley, son of the renowned John Wodehouse, Esq., who gained so much honour at the battle of Agincourt; he died in 1465, and lies buried in Kimberley chancel.

LETTER CXCVII.—(XXV. vol iv. p. 91.)

The various matter contained in this letter makes it worthy the reader's notice; the references to the receivers, accounts of Sir John Fastolf show the regularity with which all money and other transactions were entered and kept. The concluding verses furnish us with a specimen of the familiar poetry of the time.

To my cousin, Margaret Paston.

MINE own dear sovereign lady, I recommend me to you, and thank you of the great cheer that ye made me here to my great cost and charge and labour. No more at this time, but that I pray you ye will send me hither two ells of worsted[1] for doublets, to happe me this cold winter and that ye inquire where William Paston bought his tippet of fine worsted, which is almost like silk, and if that be much finer than that ye should buy me after seven or eight shillings, then buy me a quarter and the nail thereof for collars, though it be dearer than the other, for I would make my doublet all worsted for worship of Norfolk, rather than like Gonner's doublet.

Item, as for the matter of the nine score pounds asked by my Lady of Bedford[2] for the manor of West Thurrock, whereas Sir Thomas Howes saith that he hath no writing thereof, but that Sir John Fastolf purchased the said manor, and paid certain money in earnest, and afterwards granted his bargain to the Duke Bedford, and so the money that he took was for the money that he had paid; peradventure Sir Thomas Howes hath writing thereof, and knoweth it not; for if there be any such money paid upon any bargain he shall find it in Kyrtling's books, that was Sir John Fastolf's receiver, and it was about such time as the Duke of Bedford was last in England, which, as it is told me, was the eighth year of King Harry V. (1420), or the eighth year of King Harry VI. (1429); and the sum that he paid for the said bargain was 300 marks (200*l*). Also, he shall find the twenty-second year of King Harry (VI.), or there about (1443), in the accounts of one of Fastolf's receivers at London, that there was taken of Sir Thomas Tyrell, and of the Duchess of Exeter,[3] that was wife to Sir Lewis Johnes, farmer of the said manor, certain money for repayment of part of the said 300 marks. Also he shall find in years after that, or that year, or thereabouts, that Sir John Fastolf received money of my Lord Rivers[4] that now is, by the name of Richard Wydvile, for his own debt due to Sir John Fastolf; wherefore, if Sir Thomas be true to his master, let him do his devoir to make that Worcester, which is upheld by him with the dead's goods, be true to his master, or else it is time for Sir Thomas to forsake him, and help to punish him, or men must say that Sir Thomas is not true; and moreover let Sir Thomas examine what he can find in this matter that I sent him word of, which matter he shall find in the said receiver's books if he list to seek it.

Item, on the day after your departing I received letters by William Roos from your sons to me, and to you, and to Richard Calle, &c.

Item, I shall tell you a tale,
Pampyng and I have picked your male[5]
And taken out pieces[6] five,
For upon trust of Calle's promise we may soon unthrive,
And if Calle bring us hither twenty pound,
Ye shall have your pieces again, good and round;

[1] Worsted is a small market-town in the most eastern part of the county of Norfolk, formerly famous for the manufacture of those stuffs which still bear its name, and of which, for the worship of Norfolk, J. Paston desired his doublet might be made.

[2] Jaquelina, daughter of Peter of Luxemburgh, Earl of Saint Pol, was the second wife of John Plantagenet, Duke of Bedford; she was married to him in 1433, and after his decease in 1435, she became the wife of Sir Richard Wydvile, and died in 1472.

[3] This was most probably Margaret, daughter and heir of Sir Thomas Nevile, and widow of Thomas Beaufort, Duke of Exeter.

[4] Sir Richard Wydvile, in 1448, was created Baron Rivers of Grafton in Northamptonshire, and elected a Knight of the Garter. His daughter Elizabeth afterwards became the queen of Edward IV., who then advanced her father to the dignity of Earl Rivers. He was seized by the Lancaster mutineers, and beheaded at Banbury in 1469.

[5] Male, or mail, is a trunk or portmanteau. It is to be observed, that in the original letter the verses do not finish the line, but are written as prose.

[6] Pieces of money.

Or else if he will not pay you the value of the pieces, there
To the post do nail his ear,
Or else do him some other wrongs,
For I will no more in his default borrow;
And but if (*unless*) the receiving of my livelihood be better plied,
He shall Christ's hour and mine clean tried;[1]
And look ye be merry and take no thought,
For this rhyme is cunningly wrought.

My Lord Percy[2] and all this house
Recommend them to you, dog, cat, and mouse,
And wish ye had been here still,
For they say ye are a good gill.[3]
No more to you at this time,
But God him save that made this rhyme.
Written the of Saint Mathe,
By your true and trusty husband,
J. P.

February, between 1461 and 1465.
1 and 5 E. IV.

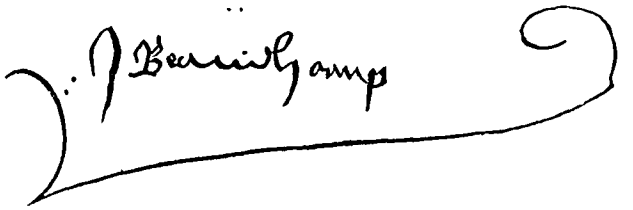
LETTER CXCVIII.—(XXVI. vol. iv. p. 97.)

John Beauchamp, Lord Beauchamp of Powick, in Worcestershire, was so created in 1447. In 1450 he was appointed Lord Treasurer, and became a Knight of the Garter. He died in 1475, 15 E. IV., and was buried in the Church of the Dominican Friars at Worcester.

To mine well-beloved, friend Sir Thomas Howes, Parson of Blofield.

WELL-BELOVED friend I greet you well, and forasmuch as I understand that William Worcester, late the servant unto Sir John Fastolf, knight, whose soul God assoil! is not had in favour nor trust with my right well-beloved friend John Paston, neither with you, as he saith, namely in such matters and causes as concerneth the will and testament of the said Sir John Fastolf; and as I am informed the said William purposeth him to go into his country, for the which cause he hath desired me to write unto you that ye would be a special good friend unto him for his said master's sake, to have all such things as reason and conscience requireth, and that ye would be (*a*) mean unto Paston for him in this matter, to show him the more favour at this time for this my writing in doing of any trouble to him, trusting that he will demean him in such wise that he shall have no cause unto him but to be his good master as he saith, and if there be anything that I can do for you, I will be right glad to do it, and that knoweth Almighty God, which have you in his keeping. Written at Greenwich, the 28th day of August. J. BEAUCHAMP.

Greenwich,
28th of August,
between 1461 and 1466.
1 and 6 E. IV.



[1] I do not understand this line. [In the transcript it stands—"He shall Crists ours and mine clene tryed." May there not be an error in the transcription? "He shall Christ's *curs* and mine clean *bide*" would give an apposite meaning, and the variations only be such as might easily occur in copying.]

[2] This must be Henry Lord Percy, son and heir of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, who was killed at the battle of Towton, in 1461, by Ellenor, grand-daughter and heir of Robert Lord Poynings. His father having been attainted, he continued to be called Lord Percy; but in 1472 was fully restored both in blood and title, the attainder of his father being made void. He was murdered by a tumultuous mob in Yorkshire, in 1488.

[3] An agreeable companion.

LETTER CXCIX.—(XXVII. vol. iv. p. 101.)

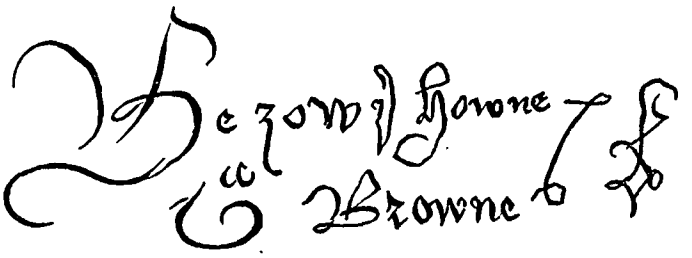
Sir George Browne, knight, of Beechworth Castle in Surrey, was the second husband of Elizabeth, the sister of J. Paston, and widow of Robert Poynyngs; this short letter was therefore most probably written by him to J. Paston in the beginning of Edward IVth's reign; it recommends in a friendly manner to him loyalty to the prince upon the throne, and seems to hint at some actions of J. Paston's done contrary thereto, which had come to Sir George's knowledge, and which he would not disclose. [It is a curious specimen of letter-writing, and has no doubt a concealed meaning; whether Fenn has explained the meaning must remain a matter of opinion.]

To my trusty and well-beloved cousin, John Paston, Esq. in haste.

LOYAWLTE, Ayme. (*Love, Loyalty.*)
It shall never come out for me.

By your own
G. BROWNE.

Written most probably between 1461 and 1466. 1 and 6 E. IV.



LETTER CC.—(XXVIII. vol. iv. p. 101.)

We have here a letter written by John Paston to his father, from Lynn in Norfolk, at a time when, by the king's command, he was to convey soldiers from thence to Yarmouth on ship-board, I suppose for foreign service. It appears from hence, likewise, that the soldiers wore the livery of those who retained them.

To my right worshipful father, John Paston.

PLEASE you to weet that I am at Lynn, and understand by divers persons, as I am informed, that the master of Carbrooke[1] would take a rule in the Mary Talbot as for captain, and to give jackets of his livery to divers persons which he waged by other men, and not by him, being in the said ship; wherefore inasmuch as I have but few soldiers in mine livery here, to strengthen me in that which is the king's commandment, I keep with me your two men Dawbeney and Calle, which I purpose shall sail with me to Yarmouth, for I have purveyed harness for them, and ye shall well understand by the grace of God that the said master of Carbrooke shall have none rule in the ships, as I[2] had purposed he should have had, because of his business;[3] and for this is one of the special causes I keep your said men with me, beseeching you ye take it to none displeasure with me, notwithstanding their herden[4] at Wygenhall shall be done this day, by the grace of God, who have you in his keeping.

[1] The master of Carbrooke, I believe, means the master of the commandry of Carbrooke in Norfolk, formerly a society of Knights Templars, and the only one in the county, who were bound to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, either as religious devotees or as soldiers to fight against the infidels.

[2] It appears that in this case the master was subordinate to J. Paston, and under his command.

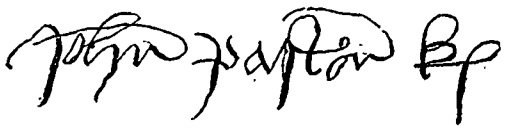
[3] [Because of his making himself so busy.]

[4] I do not understand the meaning of the word herden. [Is it not herding, or assembling? Meaning that notwithstanding their assembling at Wygenhall was required for some purpose, yet in a case of such need he had ventured to retain them.]

Written at Lynn, the morrow after my departing from you.

Item, as for such tidings as be here Th. shall inform you. JOHN PASTON.

Written between 1461 and 1466.
1 and 6 E. IV.



LETTER CCI.—(XXIX. vol. iv. p. 105.)

As this letter has no subscription, the writer cannot be ascertained, though it appears to be written by one who had some concern at the county court, where election or other country disputes seemed to be expected to come on. He was probably a retainer of some great man or lady whose interest he was to support. The being obliged to send as far as Cambridge for a physician must have been both troublesome and expensive. [It appears to us rather that he was sued for debt. He feared arrest if found in the town, and expected a distress on his property. Without the assistance he prays for, he "must sell or let to farm all that he has."]

To my right worshipful Mistress Paston.

I RECOMMEND me to your good mistress-ship, beseeching you in the way of charity, and as I may be your beadsman and servant, that ye will let me have weeting how I may be ruled against the next shire; it is said there shall be much more people than were the last; and also if I be in my lady's place, or in any other in the town. I shall be taken out. Also, mistress, that my master Radcliff shall take all my cattell (*chattles*) and all other poor good that I have, and so but (*unless*) I may have help of my master and of you I am but lost. Also my servant Maryot will go from my wife to my right great hurt, wherefore, mistress, I beseech your help in all these, and I shall content the costs as ye shall be pleased, by the grace of God, who ever preserve you, &c.

Also, mistress, I cannot be without your continual help, but I must sell or let to farm all that I have.

Mistress my lady sent to Cambridge for a doctor of physic, if ye will anything with him he shall abide this day and to-morrow, he is right a cunning (*skilful*) man and a gentle.

Written
between 1461 and 1466.
1 and 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCII.—(XXX. vol. iv. p. 107.)

As it is always best to have the characters of the writers of these letters from their contemporaries, I have given this letter as furnishing us with that of Hugh Fenn. The mention of pewter vessels shows us what was then fashionable; and the aunt here mentioned I believe was a Berney. This letter appears to have been written after the decease of Sir John Pastolf, and in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful husband I recommend me to you, please it you to weet that mine aunt is deceased, whose soul God assoil! and if it please you to send word how ye will that we do for the livelihood that she had at Walcot, whither ye will that anybody take possession there in your name or not; and if it like you to have with you my cousin William her son, I trow ye should find him a necessary man to take heed to your household, and to buy all manner of stuff needful thereto, and to see to the rule and good guiding thereof, it hath been told me before that he can good skill of such things, and if ye will that I send for him, and speak with him thereof, I shall do as ye send me word, for in faith it is time to croue[1]

[1] [Croon is a Scotch word for to hum or talk over, and *crone* appears to be used here in a somewhat similar sense.]

your old officers for divers things, whereof I have known part by Dawbeney, and more I I shall tell you when ye come home.

Also it is thought by my cousin Elizabeth Clere, and the vicar, and others that be your friends, that it is right necessary for you to have Hew (*Hugh*) of Fenn to be your friend in your matters, for he is called right faithful and trusty to his friends that trust him; and, as it is reported here, he may do much with the king and the lords; and it is said that he may do much with them that be your adversaries, and therefore for God's sake, if ye may have his good will, forsake it not; also it is thought the more learned men ye have of your own country of your counsel, the more worshipful it is to you.

Also, if ye be at home this Christmas, it were well done ye should do purvey a garnish or twain of pewter vessel, two basins and two ewers, and twelve candlesticks, for ye have too few of any of these to serve this place: I am afraid to purvey much stuff in this place till we be surer thereof. The blessed Trinity have you in his blessed keeping. Written the Thursday next after St. Andrew.

By your MARGARET PASTON.

Thursday, December,
between 1461 and 1466.
1 and 6 E. IV

LETTER CCIII.—(XXXI. vol. iv. p. 109.)

We have here a curious instance of a person illegally recovering an estate by making a great man a party in the proceedings, for such manifestly appears to have been the case here, where Rous takes possession of the manor of East Lexham, and then makes a feoffment of it to the Earl of Warwick, thinking that no one would dare to dispute his title when sanctioned by this nobleman. [We do not see the manifest illegality here, though there may be some hardship. Rous claims in virtue of an entail, and if this really existed, the case is only like many of modern times wherein a purchaser suffers from having accepted a bad title. The recovery "ageyne the aunsetrys of Rows" may have easily occurred, either through collusion, or by the right of entail not having then accrued to the plaintiff.]

To my right worshipful Sir and my right good nephew, John Paston, Esq. be this letter delivered, &c.

RIGHT worshipful Sir and my right good nephew, I recommend me unto you with all mine heart; please it you to understand the great necessity of my writing to you is this, that there was made an exchange by the grandsire of my husband Mundeford, on whose soul God have mercy! of the manor of Gressenhall with the ancestors of Rous for the manor of East Lexham, the which is part of my jointure, and my grandfather Mundeford recovered the said manor of East Lexham by assize[1] against the ancestors of Rous, and so made it clear; and now have Edmund Rous[2] claimed the said manor of East Lexham by the virtue of a tail (*an entail*) and hath taken possession, and made a feoffment to my Lord of Warwick,[3] and Walter Gorge,[4] and to Curde;[5] and on Friday before St. Valentine's day Walter Gorge and Curde entered and took possession for my said Lord of Warwick, and so both the foresaid manors were untailed; and at the same time of the exchange made, the tails and evidence of both (*the*) foresaid manors were delivered unto the parties indifferently by the advice of men learned; wherefore I beseech you that it please you to take the great labour upon you to inform my lord's good lordship of the truth in the form above written, and that it please you to understand whether that my lord will abide by the feoffment made to him or not, and that it shall please my lord that I may have right, as law require it; for I trust to God by such time as my lord shall be in-

[1] Assize is a writ directed to the sheriff of the county for recovery of the possession of things immoveable, whereof yourself or ancestors have been dispossessed.

[2] Edmund Rous was second son of Henry Rous, Esq. of Dennington, in Suffolk, the ancestor of the present family, which had the title of Baronet conferred upon the head of it in 1660.

[3] Richard Nevile, Earl of Warwick.

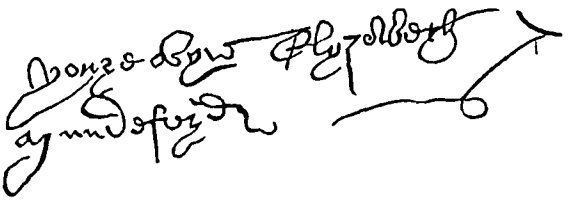
[4] Walter Gorges, Esq. married Mary, the daughter and heir of Sir William Oldhall, and was at this time lord of the manor of Oldhall in Great Fransham; he died in 1466. His son and heir, Sir Edmund Gorges, afterwards married a daughter of Sir John Howard, knight, the first Duke of Norfolk of that family.

[5] John Curde was lord of the manor of Curde's Hall in Fransham.

formed of the truth by you, that his lordship will not support the foresaid Rous against my right; and if I had very understanding that my lord would take no part in the matter abovesaid, I would trust to God's mercy, and to you, and other of my good friends to have possession again in right hasty time, beseeching you to pardon me of my simple writing, for (*I*) had no leisure. Right worshipful and my right good nephew I beseech the blessed Trinity have you in his gracious keeping. Written at Norwich in great haste the Tuesday next after St. Valentine's day.

Your own ELIZABETH MUNDEFORD.[1]

Norwich, Tuesday, February, between 1461 and 1466. 1 and 6 E. IV.



LETTER CCIV.—(XXXII. vol. iv. p. 113.)

This letter contains a curious circumstance, it shows us a person petitioning for a place, and promising, if he should be successful, he would make the son of the person through whose interest he obtained it an annual present of five marks. May we not compare this transaction with those of modern times? John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, was appointed Lord Treasurer in 1462, which office he had also before held in the late king's reign. On the re-accession of Henry VI. he was taken prisoner, unjustly accused of cruelty, convicted, and in October 1470 beheaded.

To the right reverend and worshipful Sir, my right honourable master, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, and my right honourable master, I recommend me to you in my most humble wise, and please it your good mastership to weet, that it is said here that my Lord Worcester is like to be treasurer, with whom I trust ye stand right well in conceit, with which God continue; wherefore I beseech your mastership that if my said lord have the said office, that it like you to desire the nomination of one of the offices, either of the Controuller or Searchership of Yarmouth, for a servant of yours; and I should so guide me in the office as I trust should be most profit to my said lord; and if your mastership liked to get grant thereof, that then it please you to licence one of your servants to take out the patent of the said office, and if it cost five, or six, or eight marks (*3l. 6s. 8d., or 4l., or 5l. 6s. 8d.*) I shall truly content it again; and yearly as long as I might have the offices, or any of them, I shall give my master your son five marks (*3l. 6s. 8d.*) toward an hackney (*a road horse*).

It should be to me right a good mean to stand as well in the trust as in the conceit amongst merchants, with whom, and with all men, I call myself a servant of yours, and so will do if it please you, which boldeth (*emboldens*) me the more to call upon your worshipful mastership in this matter, wherein I beseech you to forgive me my boldness in this behalf. And if I knew that my lord should have the office in certain, then I would wait upon your good mastership there to obtain the patent, if it pleased your good mastership to get me the grant, &c.

No more unto you my right honourable master at this time, but Jesu I beseech send you a good conclusion in all your matters, and grant you ever your heart's desire.

Your continual servant and beadsman,

JOHN RUSSE.

1462. 2 E. IV.

[1] Elizabeth Mundeford was the widow of Osbert Mundeford, Esq., of Hockwold, in Norfolk, and was daughter of John Berney, Esq., by which means she was aunt to J. Paston.

LETTER CCV.—(XII. vol. i. p. 257.)

To my worshipful master, John Paston the oldest, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful Sir, I heartily recommend me unto your reverence, thanking you for the great cheer and comfortable words that ye gave unto me what time that I was last in your presence; desiring full specially of Almighty God, out of all your worldly tribulations and adversity gracious deliverance, and in all virtuous prosperity good increase and continuance. If it like your mastership to know the cause of this writing, it is this; it is not unknown[1] unto you that Master Brakle, Christ rest his soul! delivered to William Paston your brother, certain obligations, of the which the duty should grow to my convent in Norwich.

I have spoke to William Paston hereof, and he excuseth him, and saith on this wise; that by the will of Master Brakle, what time that Sir Thomas Todenham, knight, should be put unto his death, he delivered them unto his confessor; the which, as he saith, should be a Grey friar, whose name he knoweth not. Also, he saith, that after the death of the foresaid knight he spake with the friar, confessor unto the knight, and asked him after the foresaid obligations, and, as he saith, the friar said unto him that he had delivered them unto (*the*) knight marshall.

Wherefore I beseech you, as specially as I may, that now while your brother is at London, that ye of your grace will know the truth in this matter, for the comfort of the dead and profit of my convent.

No more at this time, but that I beseech Almighty God in Trinity conserve yours, and keep you in all virtuous prosperity. Amen.

Written at Heylesdon in great haste, the 12th day of May, in your manor after meat.

The cause why the master delivered them to him more than to you, was, as he said unto me, forasmuch as ye had so many matters in hand for yourself, and also for the dead, that he durst not attempt you with all; and also because he had less for to do, his hope was that he should a sped (*have done*) it more readily.

Friar William Thorp dwells at Salisbury.

By your poor orator and beadsman,

Friar JOHN MOWTH.

Heylesdon, 12th of May, 1462.
2 E. IV.

LETTER CCVI.—(XIII. vol. i. p. 261.)

The first part of this letter relates to the disputes concerning Sir John Fastolf's estates, and shows that proceedings concerning property were often carried on in a clandestine manner. [Then as now each party taking all legal advantages of each other.]

To my right honourable and worshipful master, my Master Paston.

PLEASE it your worshipful mastership to weet, that it is informed me this day secretly, that there is directed out a commission to Master Yelverton[2] and master Jenney[2] which shall to-morrow sit by virtue of the same at Saint Olave's,[3] and the substance of gentlemen and yeomen of Lothingland be assigned to be afore the said commissioners; and it is supposed it is for my master's lands, for as the said person informed me, the said commissioners have been at Cotton, and there entered and holden a court; I cannot inform your mastership that it is thus in certain, but thus it was told me, and desired me to keep it secret; but because I conceive it is against your mastership, it is my part to give you relation thereof.

I send you a letter which cometh from Worcester[4] to my master your brother, I would ye understood the intent of it, for as for Worcester I know well he is not good.

[1] [Fenn by mistake prints this *known*.]

[2] I suppose these were William Yelverton, a judge of the King's Bench, and William Jenney, a serjeant-at-law.

[3] St. Olave's, a village in the hundred of Lothing, in Suffolk.

[4] William Worcester, the secretary and servant of Sir John Fastolf, and one of his executors.

Some men are busy to make war, for by the absenting of my master, the parson cometh not of his own motion, but I would your mastership knew by whom it is moved. I heard you never call him false priest, by my truth, nor other language that is rehearsed (*to or by*) him, but God send a good accord, for of variance cometh great hurt often time; and I beseech Jesu send your mastership your heart's desire, and amend them that would the contrary.

Sir, yester even a man came from London, and he saith, the king came to London on Saturday, and there did make a proclamation that all men that were between sixty and sixteen should be ready to wait upon him whensoever they were called; [1]and it is said, that my Lord Warwick had sent to the king, and informed his highness that the Lord Somerset[2] had written to him to come to grace, but of the fleet of ships[3] there is no tidings in certain at London on Monday last past.

Your beadsman and servant,

JOHN RUSSE.

1462. 2 E. IV.

LETTER CCVII.—(XIV. vol. i. p. 263.)

This appears to contain the report of the day relative to the transactions of the fleet which was sent out towards Britanny in 1462, but which seems to have had no foundation, at least no material one, as our historians make no mention of such an engagement, nor does the writer himself give much credit to the report. It however authenticates the truth of a fleet having been sent out at that time.

To my right honourable and worshipful master, my master, John Paston.

PLEASE your worshipful mastership to weet, there is a ship of Hythe, which saith that John Cole came from the west coast on Wednesday last past; and he saith that the fleet of ships of this land met with sixty sail of Spaniards, Bretons, and Frenchmen, and there took of them fifty, whereof twelve ships were as great as the Grace de Dieu; and there is slain on this part the Lords Clinton and Dacre,[4] and many gentlemen,[5] juve and others, the number of four thousand, and the said Spaniards were purposed with merchandize into Flanders; my Lord of Warwick's ship, the Mary Grace, and the Trinity, had the greatest hurt, for they were foremost. God send grace this be true. On Thursday last past at London was no tidings in certain where the fleet was, nor what they had done, and therefore I fear the tidings the more.

Item, Sir, as for tidings at London, there were arrested by the treasurer forty sail lying in Thames, whereof many small ships; and it is said it is to carry men to Calais in all haste, for fear of the king of France for a siege; and it was told me secretly there were two hundred in Calais sworn contrary to the king's weal, and for default of their wages; and that Queen Margaret was ready at Boulogne with much silver to pay the soldiers in case they would give her entrance; many men be greatly afraid of this matter, and so the treasurer hath much to do for this cause.

Item, Sir, as for tidings out of Ireland, there were many men at London at the fair of the countries next them of Ireland, and they say, this three weeks came there neither ship nor boat out of Ireland to bring no tidings; and

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[1] A similar proclamation is said to have been issued in 1464.

[2] This letter must have been written in 1462, as in that year the Duke of Somerset was generously pardoned; but revolting, was taken at the battle of Hexham, and beheaded.

[3] This fleet was most probably that which our historians mention as being sent this year to Britanny and the Isle of Rhée, but of which the foreign historians say nothing.

[4] John Lord Clinton, revolted from Henry VI. about 1459, and joined the Duke of York's party, on which account his lands were confiscated and himself attainted, but, on the accession of Edward IV., he was restored to his estates and honours, and soon after joined in commission with the Earl of Kent, Sir John Howard, &c., for the safe keeping of the seas, when, landing in Britanny with 10,000 men, they won Coquet with the Isle of Rhée. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Fynes, Lord Dacre, and died in 1464, aged about fifty-four years; the report therefore of his death here mentioned was certainly premature, as was that likewise of Lord Dacre.

[5] This word is doubtful in the original. [It may be intended for juvenile.]

so it seemeth there is much to do there by the Earl of Pembroke;[1] and it is said, that the king should be at London as on Saturday or Sunday last past, and men deem that he would to Calais himself; for the soldiers are so wild there, that they will not let in any man but the king or my Lord Warwick; other tiding there were come to London, but they were not published; but John Welles shall abide a day the longer to know what they are. No more unto you my right honourable master at this time, but Jesu send you your heart's desire, and amend them that would the contrary.

Your beadsman and continual servant,

JOHN RUSSE.

1462. 2 E. IV.

LETTER CCVIII.—(XXXIII. vol. iv. p. 117.)

This letter was most probably written early in the reign of Edward IV., but in what year I cannot easily determine. The pardon of J. Paston here mentioned must have reference to the late change of the government, and the restlessness of the Scotch and Welsh alludes to the time when Queen Margaret was soliciting their assistance, I believe. The reflections here thrown upon the courage of Lord Scales are new, and I should think not well founded, as his character has ever been handed down to us as that of a nobleman highly distinguished for deeds of arms, not only against the enemies of his country, but in the gallant feats of chivalry; yet we have the authority of the king for the insinuation here thrown out by J. Paston. There was, however, at this time some disagreement between these spirited young men, which soon subsided; and my Lord Scales afterwards became his warm friend and advocate. We must, therefore, make some allowance for the asperity of the expressions here recorded, and consider them as the hasty words of a young man uttered in a moment of anger. Anthony Widville was summoned to parliament as Lord Scales in 1461, and by the death of his father in 1469 became Earl Rivers; this letter, therefore, must have been written between those years, if my former supposition should be wrong.

To Mistress Margaret Paston.

MOST worshipful and my most special good mother, as humbly as I can I recommend me unto you, beseeching you of your blessing; please it you to understand that this day I spake with Batchelor Water, which let me have understanding of your welfare, whereof I thank God with all my heart; also he let me have knowledge that the Lord Scales had granted you to be my good lord, whereof I am nothing proud, for he may do least with the great master; but he would depart over the sea as hastily as he may, and because he weeneth that I would go with him, as I had promised him ever, and he had kept forth his journey at that time, this is the cause that he will be my good lord and help to get my pardon; the king is not best pleased with him for that he desireth to depart, insomuch that the king hath said of him that whensoever he hath most to do, then the Lord Scales will surest ask leave to depart, and weeneth that it is most because of cowardice.

As for pardon, I can never get, without I should pay too much money for it, and I am not so purveyed.

As for Harry Hallman my brother will ask him no silver till ye be paid, therefore ye may send to him and have it.

Item, I am sorry that ye have fadyrd (*fathered*) my horse that was at Caister to be my brother Edmund's, for I had lever (*rather*) that they had him still than aught else; wherefore, though they proffer him you, from henceforth let not my brother Edmund take him, but let him say, whether they will let him have him or not, that I have promised my brother Edmund a better horse for him, so that he will not claim the same for his.

As for tidings, here be none but that the Scots and Welsh men be busy, what they mean I cannot say, my cousin John Loveday can tell you and there be any other flying tales, for he hath walked in London and so do not I; when I may I will come home with God's grace, whom I beseech to send you your heart's desire. Written the 5th day of July.

By your humblest son and servant,

JOHN PASTON.

5 July,
between 1461 and 1469.
1 and 9 E. IV.

[1] Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke, was in Ireland, endeavouring to procure assistance for the deposed King Henry, his half-brother.

LETTER CCIX.—(XXXIV. vol. iv. p. 121.)

The date of this letter cannot be exactly ascertained; it must have been written after the preceding one, as J. Russe seems now to be in office at Yarmouth. He speaks freely of Chapman, and as freely tells J. Paston of the common voice against him. I have given this letter for the strictures it contains on the character of J. Paston, and to show the anxiety of the writer of it for the good of his master. Master Fenn, here mentioned, appears to have been a lawyer of eminence, and was a person in great confidence with J. Paston, &c., as may be collected from several of the letters in this collection. [The assertion of Chapman being of no reputation, and disposed to bribery, does not proceed with a very good grace from one who has promised "v mark toward an hackney" for the son of his patron, on himself being appointed to the office. Chapman's offence was most likely his labouring "to supplant me;" and John Russe therefore ingeniously strives to make Paston's support of himself the more earnest, by endeavouring to irritate him against Chapman by repeating his gossiping scandal.]

To the right worshipful my right honourable master, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful Sir and my right honourable master, I recommend me to you in my most humble wise; and please your mastership to weet, that here is one Thomas Chapman, an evil-disposed man alway against you, as I have informed your mastership many times, and now he hath laboured to my Lord Treasurer to supplant me, and brought down writing from the king and my Lord Treasurer; but, ere his writing came, Wydeville found the means, by the supportation of Master Fenn, that we had a discharge for him out of the Chancery; wherefore the said Chapman proposeth to be at London in all haste, and to advertise the king and my Lord Treasurer against me, to the greatest hurt he can imagine: wherefore I beseech your mastership, considering his evil disposition to you, and also the rather at my poor instance, that ye like that my Lord Treasurer might understand that the said Chapman is of no reputation, but evil disposed to bribery of strangers, and by colour of his office of supervisor of the search shall greatly hurt the port; the said Chapman's supporters is Blakeney, clerk of the signet, and Avery Cornburgh, yeoman of the king's chamber; he hath here of Avery's twenty-four tuns wine, whereof at the long way he shall make the said Avery a lewd (*bad*) reckoning; the said Chapman loveth not you, nor no man to you ward, &c.

Sir, I pray God bring you once to reign among your countrymen in love, and to be dreaded; the longer ye continue there the more hurt groweth to you; men say ye will neither follow the advice of your own kindred, nor of your counsel, but continue[1] your own wilfulness, which, but grace be, shall be your destruction.

It is my part to inform your mastership as the common voice is: God better it, and grant you once heart's ease; for it is half a death to me to hear the general voice of the people, which daily increaseth, &c.

Sir, I beseech your mastership to remember my mistress for the little silver, which, for certain things delivered to your use, is due to me: I have need of it now; I have bought salt and other things, which hath brought me out of much silver: I would trust and (*if*) I needed to borrow twenty pounds, your mastership would ease me for a time, but this that I desire is mine own duty. And Jesu grant you ever your heart's desire to your worship and profit, and preserve you my right honourable master from all adversity.

Written at Yarmouth, the 15th day of July. Here is a carvel of Caen, in Normandy, and he taketh Dutchmen, and ransometh them grievously.

Your servant and beadsman,

JOHN RUSSE.

Yarmouth, 15th July,
1462, or 1463.
2 or 3 E. IV.

[1] [Fenn prints "but *only* your own wilfulness, *and* which," &c. The original is as in the text.

LETTER CCX.—(XXXV. vol. iv. p. 125.)

This letter is given as mentioning the death of one of the writers of letters in this collection, and as containing an historical fact relative to an embassy into Scotland, consisting of Richard Nevile, Earl of Warwick, Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex, John Lord Wenlock, Laurence Booth, Bishop of Durham, &c. For the time of Christopher's death see Letter ccxii. p. 166.

To my right good master, John Paston the oldest, being at Heylesdon, beside Norwich, in haste.

PLEASE your mastership weet, that Christopher Hanson is dead and buried, and as for executor or testament he made none.

As for tidings the Earls of Warwick, of Essex, Lord Wenlock, Bishop of Durham, and other, go into Scotland of inbassat (*in embassy*).

And as for the siege of Calais we hear no more thereof, blessed be God, who have you in his keeping.

Item, as for Christopher's papers that longeth to your tenants, I have gotten (*them*) of William Worcester, and as for all the remanent of Christopher's goods William Worcester hath the rule as him seemeth most convenient. Your

THOMAS PLAYTERS.

After July, 1462.
2 E. IV.

LETTER CCXI.—(XV. vol. i. p. 267.)

John Paston appears, according to the commendable custom of those times, to have been brought up in the family of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, and at this time, when he was scarcely twenty years of age, to have been an attendant upon him at his castle of Holt, in Denbighshire.

To my right reverend and worshipful father, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful father, I recommend me unto you, beseeching you lowly of your blessing. Please it you to have knowledge that my lord is purposed to send for my lady,[1] and is like to keep his Christmas here in Wales; for the king hath desired him to do the same, wherefore I beseech you that (*you*) would vouchsafe to send me some money by the bearer hereof; for in good faith, as it is not unknown to you, that I had but two nobles[2] in my purse, which that Richard Calle took (*delivered*) me by your commandment when I departed from you out of Norwich.

The bearer hereof should buy me a gown with part of the money, if it please you to deliver him as much money as he may buy it with; for I have but one gown at Framlingham, and another here, and that is my livery gown,[3] and we must wear them every day for the more part, and one gown without change will soon be done.

As for tidings, my Lord of Warwick yed (*went*) forwards into Scotland, as on Saturday last past with twenty thousand men, and Sir William Tunstall is taken with the garrison of Bamborough[4] and is like to be headed, and by the means of Sir Richard Tunstall[5] his own brother.

As soon as I hear any more tidings, I shall send them you by the grace of God, who have you in his keeping. Written in haste at the castle of the Holt, upon Hallowmass day.

Your son and lowly servant,
J. PASTON, *jun.*

Holt, 1st of November, 1462.
2 E. IV.

[1] Elizabeth Duchess of Norfolk, was daughter of John Talbot, the first Earl of Shrewsbury.

[2] A noble is 6*s.* 8*d.*

[3] We learn from hence that the young gentleman attending upon the great men were generally obliged to appear dressed in their livery gowns.

[4] Bamborough Castle, in Northumberland, was taken by Queen Margaret, and garrisoned with Scots.

[5] Sir William Tunstall was taken in the garrison on King Edward's part, whilst his brother, Sir Richard, was in the army of Queen Margaret.

LETTER CCXII.—(XVI. vol. i. p. 271.)

The facts mentioned in this letter are curious, as well those relative to the queen and lords, as those concerning Earl Douglas; and must have happened in 1462, or in the beginning of 1463.

To my master, John Paston, at Heylesdon.

ITEM, please you weet of other tidings; these lords in your other letter, with Lord Hastings and others, (*have*) been to Carlisle to receive in the Queen of Scots.[1] And upon this appointment Earl Douglas[2] is commanded to come thence, and as a sorrowful and a sore rebuked man lieth in the Abbey of Saint Alban; and by the said appointment shall not be reputed nor taken but as an Englishman, and if he come in the danger of Scots they to slay him. Item, King Harry and his adherents in Scotland shall be delivered; and Lord Dacre of the north is won and yielded, and the said lord, Sir Richard Tunstall, and one Byllingham in the said castle be taken and headed. Item, the queen and prince have been in France and have made much ways and great (*number of*) people to come to Scotland and there trust to have succour, and thence to come into England. What shall fall I cannot say, but I heard that these appointments were taken by the young lords of Scotland, but not by the old.

Your

PLAYTERS.

Christopher died *on the* Saturday next before Saint Margaret (*20th July*), in the 2d year of Edward IV.

After the 20th July, 1462. 2 E. IV. } I believe in 1463.

LETTER CCXIII.—(XXXVI. vol. iv. p. 127.)

This letter, dated from Stamford (either in Northumberland or Yorkshire), appears to have been written in March 1462-3, when the king had an army in the north to act against the Scots, who had made several attempts in favour of Henry and Margaret. The letter is written in an easy and dutiful style, and the request in it seems reasonable from a young man attending his royal master in the field. In the year 1463 Easter Sunday fell upon the 10th of April, which gave a sufficient time for his father to have money ready for him according to his request. He subscribes himself the older, to distinguish himself from his younger brother John Paston. [It was not uncommon at this period, though it must have been inconvenient, to have, as in this instance, brothers or sisters with the same baptismal names.]

To mine right reverend and worshipful father, John Paston, being in the Inner Temple.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful father, I recommend me unto you, beseeching you of your blessing and good fatherhood. Please it you to understand the great expense that I have daily travelling with the king, as the bearer hereof can inform you, and how long that I am like to tarry here in this country ere I may speak with you again, and how I am charged to have mine horse and harness ready, and in hasty wise, beseeching you to consider these causes, and so to remember me that I may have such things as I may do my master service with, and pleasure, trusting in God it shall be to your worship and to mine avail; in especial I beseech you, that I may be sure where to have money somewhat before Easter, either of you or by mine uncle Clement, when need

[1] Mary, daughter to Arnold, Duke of Guelders, was married to James II., king of Scotland, in 1448, and died in 1463.

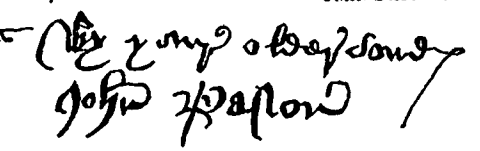
[2] James Earl of Douglas was banished his own country, and being received by Edward in England with honour and respect was by him made a Knight of the Garter. In 1483 he was taken prisoner by the Scots, and detained a prisoner till his death, in 1488. He is said to have entered into holy orders.

is; of other causes the bearer hereof can inform you. No more to you at this time, but God have you in his keeping.

Written at Stamford, the 13th day of March. By your older son,

JOHN PASTON.

Stamford,
Sunday, 13th of March, 1462-3. 3 E. IV.



LETTER CCXIV.—(XXXVII. vol. iv. p. 129.)

This letter contains nothing by which we can exactly fix the date, though it must have been written between 1462 and 1465, as it appears from it that J. Paston's son had been knighted. The hint of him and his son being out of the king's good grace would fix it about 1465, as in 1466 J. Paston was committed to the Fleet, and died the same year. The exact date, however, is immaterial, the character of the father being the object of the reader's notice. [The writer is not known.]

To my worshipful master, Master Paston, the eldest.

RIGHT worshipful master, I recommend me unto your mastership, and of one matter at reverence of God take heed, for in truth I hear much talking thereof, and that is both in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Norwich among all men of worship, as well that love you as others, and that is of my master, your son Sir John,[1] because he is so at home, and none other wise set for (*provided for*). Some say that ye and he both stand out of the king's good grace, and some say that ye keep him at home for negardchepe (*niggardship, covetousness*), and will no thing ware (*spend*) upon him, and so each man say his advice as it please him to talk; and I have inquired, and said the most cause is in part for cause ye are so much out, that he is the rather at home for the safeguard of the coasts. But at the reverence of God eschewing of common language, see that he may worshipfully be set for either in the king's service or in marriage; for as for touching the Lady Chamberlayne[2] that matter is done for, I spake with the parson thereof, and I heard by him that that matter will not pre. (*q. will not succeed.*)

No more, but God speed you as well in all matters as I would ye should do, I beseech you that this letter be kept secret.

By your beadsman, R. C. V. C.

Between 1462 and 1465.
2 and 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXV.—(XXXVIII. vol. iv. p. 131.)

We have here the whole process of a writ of fieri facias, and the subterfuges used by the defendants to defeat its effect, which they seem to have understood as well formerly as in these days of modern refinements and vexatious proceedings. [Master Hugh Fenn appears not to have been quite so true and trusty a friend as he has been represented in some of the preceding letters.]

To my right worshipful mistress, my mistress, Margaret Paston, at Caister.

PLEASE it your good mistress-ship to weet, that a fieri facias[3] is come out of the Exchequer for Hugh Fenn to the sheriff of Norfolk to make levy of two hundred marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*)

[1] It appears from this letter that Sir John Paston was knighted in the life-time of his father.

[2] This Lady Chamberlayne was Anne, daughter and sole heir of Sir Robert Herling, knight, by Jane, daughter and heir of John Gonvile, Esq. She married to her first husband Sir William Chamberlayne, Knight of the Garter, a renowned and valiant soldier, who died in 1462. She was at this time his widow, and inherited from her father a very considerable fortune. She afterwards married Sir Robert Wingfield, and after his decease she became the wife of John Lord Scrope of Bolton. By the name of Lady Scrope she founded and endowed a fellowship in the college of Gonvile and Caius at Cambridge, originally founded by an ancestor of her ladyship's. She was born in 1426, and was alive in 1502. At the time this letter was writing she must have been nearly forty years old, when Sir John Paston could not have been much above twenty.

[3] Fieri facias is a writ judicial, that lies (at all times

of the proper goods and chattels of my master, as executor of Sir John Fastolf, of which fieri facias we sent my master word, which sent us word again by Berney that we should let the sheriff understand that my master never took upon him as executor, and so for that cause that writ was no warrant to take my master's goods; and also that my master made a deed of gift of all his goods and chattels to Master Prowet and Clement Paston and others, so that my master hath no goods whereof he should make levy of the foresaid sum; and if the sheriff would not take this for none answer, that then my master would he should be letted (*hindered*) in Master Prowet's and Clement Paston's names; nevertheless we spake with the sheriff this day, and let him understand the causes aforesaid, and he agreed, so that he might have surety to save him harmless, to make such return as my master of his counsel could devise,[1] and because my master wrote by Berney that he would not find the sheriff no surety, we would not appoint with him in that wise; and so we took advice of Thomas Green, and because the under-sheriff shall be on Monday at (*Potter*) Heigham, by Bastwick Bridge end, he and we thought that it was best that Master Prowet should meet with the sheriff there, and require and charge him that by colour of the foresaid fieri facias that he make no levy of any goods and chattels of the said Prowet's and Clement Paston's against the said John Paston's, letting him weet that such goods, as the said Paston had, be now the said Prowet's and Clement Paston's by virtue of a deed of gift made to them almost two years ago; and if the sheriff will be busy after that to take any chattel, that he be letted in Master Prowet's name and Clement Paston's by Daubeney and others; which business of the sheriff shall be on Tuesday or Wednesday, and, as we understand, at Heylesdon; wherefore ye must send thither Daubeney with Peacock, and they may get them there more fellowship by the advice of master Sir John Paston.

JAMES GRESHAM.

Written
between 1462 and 1465. 2 and 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXVI.—(XXXIX. vol. iv. p. 135.)

[The proceeding respecting Hall, "claimed for a bondman," is curious, and in a case where the damages were so large, the details we have no doubt would have been still more interesting; but were probably too well known to have been given in a familiar letter of the time. Villenage was nearly extinct at this time, but letters of enfranchisement were granted by Elizabeth, and villenage was pleaded, though unsuccessfully, as late as the reign of James I. See 'Hallam's Middle Ages,' vol. iii.]

Unto my mistress, Margaret Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful mistress, I recommend me unto your good mistress-ship; please it you to weet that my master your husband, my mistress your mother, my master Sir John, Master William, Master Clement, and all their men were in good health when this letter was written, thanked be Jesu, and also their matters be in a good way, for my Lord Chancellor[2] is their singular good lord in this matter at this time, and that it proveth so ..... he was yesterday in the Exchequer, and there he had afore him all the judges, all the barons of the Exchequer, and all the serjeants, and there argued wher (*whether*) that the barons of the Exchequer should award any such commission[3] or not, and upon that the said commission shall be brought upon Friday into the Chancery, and there to be proved whether it be lawful or not, &c.

Item, and if it please you to give Daveney[4] knowledge that there is judgment given upon the condemnation against Hall, that he claimed for his bondman, and the judgment

within the year and day, for him that hath recovered in an action of debt or damages) to the sheriff, to command him to levy the debt or damages of his goods against whom the recovery was had.

[1] [Fenn has, by mistake, *desire*.]

[2] George Nevile, Bishop of Exeter (or Archbishop of York), was Lord Chancellor at this time.

[3] We do not learn what this commission related to.

[4] [Query if this name is not intended for Daubeney.]

is given against Daveney, Richard Calle, and Thomas Bon, and there is coming out process for to take their bodies this same day, and if they or any of them be taken they shall never go out of prison unto the time that they have satisfied the party of eight score marks [1] (106*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) and therefore let them beware, &c. The Holy Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at London, upon Thursday next after the purification of Our Lady, &c.

By your servant,

JOHN WYKES.

Thursday, February, between 1462 and 1465. 2 and 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXVII.—(XL. vol. iv. p. 139.)

I have given this letter for two reasons; the first, as it shows the ease with which the familiar conversation between the persons here mentioned is reduced to writing, and the second, as it throws some light upon the means used for manning and victualling such ships as then composed the navy of England.

To my most reverend and worshipful master, John Paston, dwelling at Heylesdon, be this delivered

Ihs

MOST reverend and worshipful master, I recommend me unto your good mastership; please you to have knowledge, on the Friday at afternoon next after Saint Peter, there was at the tavern in London old Debenham and young Debenham, Thomas Edmonds and I; and there the said Thomas Edmonds fell in communication with old Debenham, and said that my Lord Treasurer,[2] had put him to a great charge [*office*] for the victualling of (*the*) Mary Talbot,[3] saying to old Debenham that he heard say that he had a hundred bullocks to sell, the which the said Edmonds will buy so that they may accord of the price: then the said old Debenham answered again and said he would, so that he might have good payment, or else the said Edmonds to be bound in an obligation to pay him at such days as they might accord; anon, upon this same language, young Debenham spake to his father, "Sir, I pray you that ye will take avisement of this matter till to-morrow, for I trust to your good fatherhood that ye will let me have a serteyn (*a certain number*) of your bullocks for the victualling of the barge of Yarmouth, and I shall find you sufficient surety for the payment thereof; for Edmonds, I will that ye know I have been there, and spoke with the owner and with the master of the said barge, and they know my appointment."

Then the said Edmonds answered to young Debenham, and told him that the city of Norwich and Yarmouth hath granted, and sent writing to the king and to the lords, that they will man and victual the said barge of their own costs from the time of her going out till her coming home; and thus the said Edmonds told him that my Lord Treasurer and all the lords that be at London think they do right well their devoir (*duty*), and be worthy much thank of the king: "Well," quoth young Debenham, "I had in commandment for to have the rule of the said barge, and I will be at Yarmouth ere this day four days, and man her and bring her down to the Gylys [*Giles*] of Hull, for that is my ship."

Also, he said more, without that he might have the said barge, he will not go to sea but himself and his twenty-four men, and thus, if please your mastership, he departed from the tavern; and at his departing he told the said Thomas Edmonds, "this is Paston's labour;" then the said Edmonds answered him again, and said plainly he was to blame for to report so of your mastership, for he knoweth verily he said untruly of you and of my master your son both, and thereon he would take an oath; and so, if it please your good mastership, let the city of Norwich and Yarmouth have knowledge of his great cracking and boasts, and let (*hinder*) him of his purpose by the authority that they have.

Item, my master your son will have to his

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[1] The costs on this process in favour of the bondman appear large.

[2] John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester; he was beheaded in October 1470.

[3] The Mary Talbot,—it appears as if this ship received her name from the Blessed Virgin, who most probably had been implored to protect her, and from the valiant Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, who had so courageously fought in the French wars: this is merely a conjecture, and perhaps an ill-founded one.

jackets, murrey[1] and tawney, and that it please you some of my fellowship may speak to one of the drapers for to ordain it against his coming home, for I trow it shall be this day sev'night ere he cometh home.

Item, Sir, if please you Scrope hath sent to you to London by Bingham for the money that ye know of; yet I spake not with him, but I shall tell him that I suppose ye will be here in the last end of the term, and I shall send your mastership word what answer I have of him.

Item, Sir, if please, such tidings as I hear of I send you word, my Lord of Warwick hath been in Scotland[2] and taken a castle of the Scots, and upon this there came the Queen of Scots[3] with other lords of her country, as ye shall hear the names, in basetry (*in embassy*) to my said Lord of Warwick, and a truce is taken betwixt this and Saint Bartholomew's day in August: these is the last tidings that I know. No more to your good mastership at this time, but Jesu have (*you*) in keeping. Written on the Saturday next after Saint Peter. By your poor servant,

J. DAUBENEY.

Saint Peter,
Saturday, 2d of July, 1463. 3 E. IV.

LETTER CCXVIII—(XLI. vol. iv. p. 145.)

We have in this letter a further account of the proceedings relative to the commanding, manning and victualling of the barge of Yarmouth, and the means made use of to procure the different stores to fit her for her voyage, &c.

To my master John Paston, the younger, be this delivered.

SIR, I have received your letter, wherein I understand that my master desired that my master your brother might have the guiding and governance of the barge of Yarmouth; as to that, and (*if*) men of Yarmouth had known my master's intent a fortnight ago he had been sure of it, but now it is so that Debenham hath a commission of the king, expressed only for that ship named in his commission, and he hath been here at Yarmouth, and spoken with the bailiffs and with the owners of the said ship, and taken such a direction that they may grant it no man but him; and moreover he hath indented with the owners of the ship what day it shall be ready as well victualled as manned; and also he hath brought down letters from my Lord Treasurer to all persons,[4] and gentlemen in this country to help him and assist him to victual and man the said ship, and his men is here daily, and goeth about and gathereth wheat, malt, money, and whatsoever any man will give, &c.

The blessed Trinity preserve you. Written at Caister, the Friday next after I received your letter.

Item, it is talked here that my master your brother and Debenham were at words at London, and that Debenham should have stricken him had not Howard a been (*have been*), &c. whereof I am right sorry, &c. nevertheless I trust to God all shall be well.

Your servant, RICHARD CALLE.

Caister, Friday,
July 1463. 3 E. IV.

[1] Dark red or purple, and yellowish colour.

[2] This relates to the transactions in the north during the year 1463, when the Earl of Warwick commanded there after Edward's return to London, who was now attentive to the designs of France respecting Henry and Margaret.

[3] Mary, daughter of Arnold, Duke of Gueldres, and mother to James III. king of Scotland. She was a woman of heroic valour, and took an active part in the government with the regents during the minority of her son. She died during this year.

[4] In original, p'ōss. Fenn translates it *priors*.].

LETTER CCXIX.—(XLII. vol. iv. p. 147.)

We see in this letter the hold which the clergy had on the laity for any omissions in payment of what was due to the church; the danger of Sir John Paston's soul is gently touched upon, and the fears for the peace of that of Sir John Fastolf is ingeniously introduced. From the account in this letter the arrears were of so considerable standing that Sir John Paston's memory seemed to want a little refreshing, and the *bringer* of this letter appears to have received his instructions accordingly. The Abbey of Langley was founded in the time of Richard I. about the year 1198. Nicholas occurs abbot in 1428 and 1463, and Nicholas Wamerton in 1467 and 1474; it was most probably the first Nicholas who was the writer of this letter, as Wamerton can scarcely be supposed to have been the abbot so early as 1428, unless he lived to a very old age. [But he might have become abbot in 1463.]

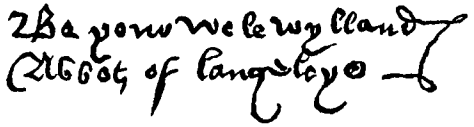
To the right worshipful Sir John Paston, knight, be this delivered.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, and tenderly beloved in our Lord God, I commend me to you, sending you knowing (*knowledge*) that I did your errand to my brother the parson of Blofield on Wednesday was se'nnight, after the understanding that I had of you and from you by this bringer, which man I felt right well and favourably disposed to you ward, and more favourably will be than to any other gentleman living, the will of the dead performed, and his conscience saved; and more things said favourably for you, which I entitled in a scroll to have certified to your servant Calle, if he had come as ye sent me word he should have done, and should as ye behested [*appointed*][1] me, have brought me our farm for Heylesdon, which not done causeth me to write, praying your gentleness that I send no more therefore, for it is unpaid for the year afore the Hallowmass that my master Falstolf died, and for the same year that he died in, and since for two years, and five shillings unpaid of a year, and come Michaelmas next shall be another year unpaid, thus is four years unpaid and five shillings, and at Michaelmas next shall be five years and five shillings.

This thus kept from holy church, that is, holy church's good, may not be without great peril of soul; where the peril is God knoweth. I pray God amend it, and give them grace that have his goods so to dispose them, that they and the dead both may be out of peril, and the Trinity have you in his merciful keeping. Written at Langley, on Sunday at even late, next after Saint John's day (*the*) decollation, (*29th of August*).

By your well-will and [willer],
ABBOT OF LANGLEY.

Langley, Sunday,
4th of September, 1463.
3 E. IV.



LETTER CCXX.—(XVII. vol. i. p. 273.)

We have in this letter a most accurate and interesting account of the noblemen and others, employed in the sieges of three castles on the eastern shore of the county of Northumberland, taken by Queen Margaret, and now in the possession of the adherents and friends of Henry VI. We are informed whence they received their victuals and ordnance, and of the soldier-like care and attention of the Earl of Warwick, who commanded the forces of King Edward. We may here observe that though the troops were hired for a certain time, yet though that time was expired, they durst not leave the camp and return home; for if they did even get away by stealth, yet if discovered and taken they would be severely punished. Others who had not obeyed the king's orders, and attended him in person, would likewise suffer severely, unless they made proper excuses for their absence; and the writer of this letter kindly offers his services, from his connexion with men of consequence about the king, to have their excuses admitted. We here also see who were most in the royal favour. These sieges were undertaken, our historians say, soon after the battle of Hexham, which was

[1] [Fenn translates—*promised*.]

fought and won on the 15th of May, 1463, by King Edward, but according to this account they were not undertaken till near eight months after. The castles of Bamborough and Dunstanborough were soon taken; but that of Alnwick, being relieved by the Scots, the garrison marched out, probably by treaty.

To my right worshipful brother, John Paston, the elder son of John Paston, Esq., be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful brother I recommend me to you; please it you to weet, that as this day we had tidings here[1] that the Scots will come into England within seven days after the writing of this letter, for to rescue these three castles, Alnwick, Dunstanborough, and Bamborough, which castles were besieged as on yesterday; and at the siege of Alnwick lieth my Lord of Kent[2] and the Lord Scales, and at Dunstanborough castle lieth the Earl of Worcester and Sir Ralph Grey, and at the castle of Bamborough lieth the Lord Montague and the Lord Ogle, and other divers lords and gentlemen that I know not; and there is to them out of Newcastle ordnance I know, both for the sieges and for the field, in case that there be any field taken, as I trow there shall none be not yet, for the Scots keep no promise. My Lord of Warwick lieth at the castle of Warkworth, but three miles out of Alnwick, and he rideth daily to all these castles for to oversee the sieges; and if they want victuals, or any other thing, he is ready for to purvey it for them to his power. The king commanded my Lord of Norfolk for to conduct victuals and the ordnance out of Newcastle unto Warkworth castle, to my Lord of Warwick; and so my Lord of Norfolk commanded Sir John Howard,[3] Sir William Peche, Sir Robert Chamberlayne, Ralph Asheton, and me, Calthorp, and Gorge, and others, for to go forth with the victuals and ordnance unto my Lord of Warwick, and so we were with my Lord of Warwick with the victuals and ordnance as yesterday.

The king lieth at Durham, and my Lord of Norfolk at Newcastle; we have people enough here. In case we abide here, I pray you purvey that I may have here more money by Christmas eve at the farthest, for I may get leave for to send none of my waged men home again; no man can get no leave for to go home but if they steal away, and if they might be known they shall be sharply punished. Make as merry as ye can, for there is no jeopardy towards not yet, and there be any jeopardy I shall soon send you word by the grace of God. I wot well ye have more tidings than we have here, but these be true tidings.

Yelverton and Jenney are like for to be greatly punished, for because they came not hither to the king; they are morkyn (*marked*) well I know, and so is John Byllingforth and Thomas Playters, wherefore I am right sorry. I pray you let them have weeting thereof, that they may purvey their excuse in haste, so that the king may have knowledge why that they came not to him in their own persons. Let them come, or send their excuse to me in writing, and I shall purvey that the king shall have knowledge of their excuse; for I am well acquainted with my Lord Hastings,[4] and my Lord Dacres,[5] which be now greatest about the king's person; and also I am well acquainted with the younger Mortymer, Ferrers, Hawte, Harpur, Crowmer, and Bosewell, of the king's house.

I pray you let my grandam and my cousin Clere have knowledge how that I desired you to let them have knowledge of the tidings in this letter, for I promised for to send them tidings. I pray you let my mother have knowledge how that I, and my fellowship, and your servants, are at the writing of this letter in good hell (*health*), blessed be God.

I pray you let my father have knowledge of this letter, and of the other letter that I sent to my mother by Felbrigg's man; and how that I pray both him and my mother lowly of their blessings.

I pray you that you will send me some letter how ye do, and of your tidings with you, for I think long that I hear no word from my mother and you.

I pray you that this bill may recommend

[1] [Fenn in error prints *how*.]

[2] William Nevile, Lord Falconbridge, now Earl of Kent.

[3] Sir John Howard, afterwards the first Duke of Norfolk of that name.

[4] William Lord Hastings, beheaded in 1483.

[5] Richard Fines, Lord Dacre.

me to my sister Margery, and to my Mistress Joan Gayne (*Jenney*), and to all good masters and fellows within Caister.

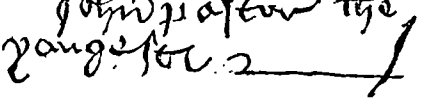
I sent no letter to my father never since I departed from you, for I could get no man to London, and never since.

I pray you in case ye speak with my cousin Margaret Clere, recommend me to her; and Almighty God have you in his keeping. Written at Newcastle on Saturday next after the Conception of our Lady.

Newcastle, Saturday,
10th of December, 1463.
3 E. IV.

Your
JOHN PASTON, *the youngest.*

I pray you let Richard Calle see this letter.



LETTER CCXXI.—(XLIII. vol. iv. p. 151.)

It appears from this letter, which contains many curious particulars, that the king interested himself in the election for the county of Norfolk, in behalf of those candidates who were recommended by the Duke of Suffolk. This parliament was summoned to meet in January 1463-4, and it appears that Paston, Berney, and Heydon, were the candidates, though Paston did not intend to be present, as his wife was to give him the earliest intelligence of what passed.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this letter delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; please you to weet that I received a letter from you on the Sunday next after Twelfth day, which was sent by a priest of St. Gregory's parish of Norwich; and whereas ye marvelled I sent you no writings of such letters as ye sent me before, I sent you an answer of the substance of such matters as ye have written of to me before (by Playters), the which he told me a [*he*] sent them to you to London. And as touching the errands that ye sent to me for to do to Richard Calle, I have done as ye commanded me to do, and called upon him, therefore, both before your writing and sithen (*since*); he therefore have none excuse for default of leisure, for he hath been but right little here since ye departed hence; he is out at this time, and when that he cometh home I shall make him make you a clear bill of the receipt of your livelihood, and Fastolf's both; and I shall send you a clear bill of my receipts, and also of my payments out thereof again; and as for such errands that should be done to Sir Thomas Howes, I have showed Richard Calle your writing, and told him your intent, as for such things as ye would he should say to him on his own head. Also I have done your errands to my mother and to my cousin Clere after your writing. Item, I have spoken to John Adam and to Playters of your intent of the last bill that ye sent me, and they say they will do after your intent as much as they may, and ye shall have an answer thereof in haste.

Item, Sir Robert Conyers dined with me this day, and showed me a letter that came from the king to him, desiring him that he should await upon his well-beloved brother the Duke of Suffolk, at Norwich, on Monday next coming, for to be at the election of knights of the shire; and he told me that every gentlemen of Norfolk and Suffolk that are of any reputation hath writing from the king in likewise as he had. I feel him by his saying, that he is right well disposed to you ward; he saith there shall no man make him to be against you in no matter. Skipwith shall tell you such tidings as beeth in this country, and of Thomas Gorney [1] and of

[1] There was at this time a Thomas Gurney, Esq., of Norwich, who had married Margaret, daughter of Sir Thomas Jernegan, of Somerleyton, and who died in 1471, but it does not appear to have been him that is here mentioned. The following extract from one of these old letters from Thomas Playters to John Paston, Esq., explains the crime committed by this person and his servant (Jan. 1463-4. 3 E. IV.).

"Please yor maistrship wete, that as for my Lord of Norwich cosyn's deth, Thomas Gurnay's man hath confessed that he slewe hym by comaundmēt of his

his man; himself is clerk convict, and his man is hanged; ye shall hear hereafter what they and others were purposed to have done to their master.

I thank you heartily of your writing to me before that John Paston came home, for God knoweth I thought right long till I heard from you; I shall send word in writing of such tidings as we have here on Monday in haste. Dawbeney desireth to weet what time that it please you that he should come again to you.

My mother and many other folks maketh much of your son John, the elder, and (*are*) right glad of his coming home, and liketh right well his demeaning. Heydon's son[1] hath borne out the side stoutly here this Christmas, and when that he rideth he hath four or five men with him in a clothing [*livery*]; but he hath but little favour in this country but if (*unless*) it be of the bishop[2] and of the prior of Norwich;[3] the said prior hath granted him the stewardship that his father had....he hath it under the convent seal, and Spilman[4] (*is*) his tutor to learn him how he should be demeaned *therein*. It is said about Baconsthorp that Harry Heydon should have said that it were well done that men of the *country* should make ready their bald batts[5] and their clouted shoen[6] (*shoes*) and go fetch home their knights of shire.....Berney; and it is promised him that he shall be met withal because of his language. *Pray God send* us a good world and a peaceable. I shall purvey for all things that ye have sent to me for, so that I ween ye shall be pleased. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written in haste, the Wednesday next *before* Saint Agnes.

Your

MARGARET PASTON.[7]

Norwich,
Wednesday, 18th January,
1463-4. 3 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXII.—(XLIV. vol. iv. p. 157.)

The king at this time was using every means to make himself popular, and for that purpose intended visiting different parts of the kingdom.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, at Cuister, in Norfolk.

AFTER due recommendation had, please it your mastership to weet that this day the plea between Ogan and you was sore (*much*) argued in the King's Bench by your counsel in letting [*resisting*] of the judgment, and tomorrow have they day to argue again. And for lack of copies of the plea I am fain to sue for new copies thereof for your counsel; your counsel hopeth to do well therein; these argued for you, Greenfield, Catesby, Pygot, Nottingham, and Starky, &c.;[8] and yesterday was the matter between Debenham and you called by Jenney[9] for an answer. I have spoken unto Catesby, and delivered him your

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maistr, and confessed ovr, that yo same dager he slewe hym wyth he kest (*cast*) it in a sege, whiche is founden and taken up al to bowyd (*bent together*), for he cowde not breke it, and in prson is bothe he and his maistr." The same letter then goes on, and says, "Also on Thursday next aftr Cristemasse was a man slayn by whom no man woot, nor what he is that was slayn, no man knowe, his face is so mangled." ("Clerk convict" means that he had been convicted, but had claimed benefit of clergy as being able to read; the master's life was thus spared and the man was hung.]

[1] This must be Henry, son of John Heydon, Esq., recorder of Norwich.

[2] Walter Lyhert [or Hart], bishop from 1445 to 1472.

[3] John Molet or Mowth, prior from 1453 to 1471.

[4] Henry Spilman, afterwards recorder of Norwich; he was the founder of the Spilmans of Narborough, by marrying Ela, daughter and heir of William de Narborough.

[5] *Bald batts* seem to mean here ball batts, or batts to play at ball with.

[6] *Clot shoen*, clouted shoes—shoes shod with thin plates of iron.

[7] A part of the original letter is torn off, which makes it defective in two or three sentences [these have been supplied in some cases by Fenn by the words in italic].

[8] I have given this letter as containing several law matters, and the names of many eminent lawyers. John Greenfield, John Catesby, and Richard Pygot, were made sergeants in November, 1464. Catesby afterwards became a judge in 1482. In 1480 William Nottingham was Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and in 1484 was succeeded by Sir Humphrey Starkey.

[9] William Jenney was made a sergeant in 1464, and a justice of the King's Bench in 1478.

information, and to be advised, and to commune with Master Greenfield, &c.

The two chief judges [1] and master Lyttelton[2] are awaiting upon the king, for the king is purposed into Gloucestershire, &c.

It is said that my Lord Chancellor[3] shall be here on Saturday or on Monday next coming, as the masters of the Chancery say. I write to you this because ye said to me if ye wist that my Lord Chancellor should be here, then would ye come hither, and else would ye not come here this term.

As touching Rysing he hath his day, utas purificationis (*9th February*), but I have that way that his presence is recondite for all this term.

Master Clement[4] telleth me that Worcester hath put exception unto your witnesses,[5] &c.

It is said that the king would ride (*into*) Sussex, Kent, Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk, and so to the parliament, for he hath sent for all his feedmen to await upon him in their best array in all haste.

Written at London, the Thursday in the morrow after Saint Paul.

Your own poor man,

JAMES GRESHAM.

London,
Thursday, 26th of January,
1463-4. 3 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXIII.—(XVIII. vol. i. p. 279.)

This curious letter, informing us of the state of the monastery of St. Augustine, in Canterbury, founded in 605, and in which Christianity was first preached by St Augustine, during the reign of Ethelbert, King of Kent, was written by Henry Berry, a religious there, and a relation of Dame Agnes Paston, the widow of Sir William Paston, the judge, and the daughter of Sir Edmund Berry, about 1463 or 1464, as Abbot James Sevenoke died in 1463, and was succeeded by William Selling, who continued abbot till 1480. The letter is both pathetic and artful; the latter part from this mark * (see p. 176) to the subscription is crossed out, but not so entirely as to hinder me from decyphering it as here given. The character at the beginning of this letter I have often met with, and particularly at the beginning of letters written by ecclesiastics. It has some religious meaning I believe; I am apt to think it stands for I.H.S. and in this particular letter, considering the form of the initial R, I suppose the whole to mean Jesu Maria.

To my right worshipful cousin, John Paston, Esq., be this letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful and reverend cousin, I recommend me unto you with all mine heart as your faithful kinsman and orator, desiring to hear of the good prosperity and welfare of your worshipful mother my lady and cousin, with your wife, Sir John Paston, your brethren William and Clement, with all your sons and daughters, to whom I beseech you heartily that I may be recommended. God of his high mercy preserve you all unto his mercy and grace, and save you from all adversity.

Worshipful cousin, my special writing and heart's desire before rehearsed, nature naturally so me compelleth,

What though I be put far out of conceit and sight,
I have you all in remembrance both day and night;

beseeching you, gentle cousin, to tender my writing. I take God to my witness I would as fain do that might be unto your honour, worship, and profit as any earthly man can think.

Wherefore now late died the abbot of our monastery, and left us in great debt; the bringer hereof is my special friend. The oldest brother in our place never heard nor saw our church in that misery that (*it*) is now; we have cast[6] the perils amongst us,

[1] John Markham, Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1462. Robert Danby, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in 1462.

[2] Thomas Lyttelton, the famous lawyer, was created a serjeant in 1453, and appointed a judge of the Common Pleas in 1467; he died in 1481, aged 79.

[3] George Neville, now Bishop of Exeter, but soon after the writing of this letter translated to York.

[4] Clement Paston, brother to John Paston.

[5] This relates to the disputes concerning Sir John Fastolf's will.

[6] *We have cast* may here signify either that we have *considered* the perils, or that we have *divided* them amongst us.

and there is none other help, but every brother that hath any worshipful kin or friends, every man to do his part to the welfare, and succour, and relief of our monastery.

Therefore worshipful cousin, I, a brother of that worshipful monastery wherein begun the faith of all this land, meekly beseecheth you in the reverence of Almighty God, to render help, and succour us in our great necessity; for in London lieth to wad (*pawn*) many rich jewels of ours, with other great debts, which my brother will inform you of.

Pleaseth your goodness, for God's sake, and all the saints of Heaven, and at my simple request, to have compassion upon us, ye having due surety both in obligations and pledges.

In the reverence of Almighty God do your alms and charity; it shall cause you to be prayed for, and all your kin as long as the church standeth; and by this means, I trust to Almighty God, to see my cousin William, or Clement, to be steward of our lands, and so to have an interest in Kent, to the worship of God and you all, which ever have you in his keeping. Amen.

Written at Canterbury in haste the 28th day of January.

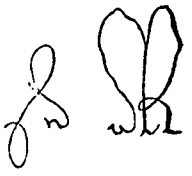
Also I beseech you show the bringer of this letter some humanity and worship, that when he cometh home he may report as he findeth.

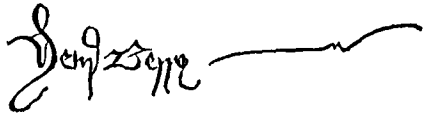
* This is the cause every while they put my kin in my beard, saying, I am come of lords, knights, and ladies. I would they were in your danger 1000 marks (666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) that they might know you, &c.

By your cousin and beadman,

HENRY BERRY.

Canterbury,
28th of January,
1463 or 1464.
3 or 4 E. IV.





LETTER CCXXIV.—(XLV. vol. iv. p. 159.)

This letter was written at a time when Edward, having confiscated many of the estates of the Lancastrians, and granted them to those of his own party, was by mildness and affability endeavouring to become popular.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, the elder, Esq.

PLEASE your mastership to weet that the assize[1] hold this day at Thetford; and as for any new assize that ye spoke of there is none, nor none there saving one for a man about Brunham.

I spake with Herward, and I asked him if there was any great day at Bury, and he said there was but a small day, and as for any assizes there were none but old; and he told me that Debenham and the under-sheriff were fallen out; Debenham bare the sheriff on hand that he had do (*caused to be*) indicted an hundred men since he came into his office, and the sheriff told him that the king's books appeared whether it was so or not, and he told Debenham that he could indict an hundred at one time when ye were indicted, and named you the cause of their breaking.

There was a man killed now late in Suffolk, and he that did it was one of Debenham's men, and Herward told me that the sheriff said to him he would do Debenham a shrewd turn and (*if*) he could.

Item, it was told me at Norwich that Master Berney should have been here with a great fellowship, and it is not so, nor no man heareth of his coming, nor here is but little people neither, there were not so few this three years, as men say.

Item, Herward asked me where John Gayne was, and I asked why, and he said there is a

[1] William Calthorpe was sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk.

capias out against him upon the condamnation,[1] and the sheriff hath it, he bade me give him warning; it is returnable xv Pasche.[2]

Item, they say here that the king was on Monday at Waltham.

Item, Nicholas Colman hath brought home your fardel: it is at Norwich.

Item, there be no more judges here but Sir Pers Ardern.[3]

Written at Thetford, the Wednesday the last day of February.

Item, Wymondham is here, and was at the Shire-house this day, and the king's livery about his neck,[4] and there stood by the judge while a letter of the king's was read; the effect was, as it was told me, that the king wills that justice be had, and that all risers against the peace and oppressors of the people be chastised, letting them weet that he was late in Cambridgeshire, and that there such as had offended asked grace, which they had, saving such as were rulers, whom he will somewhat be punished,[5] proposing to be in this country about Easter.

Your Servant, JOHN PAMPYNGE.

Thetford, Wednesday,
the last day of February,
1463-4. 3 E. IV.

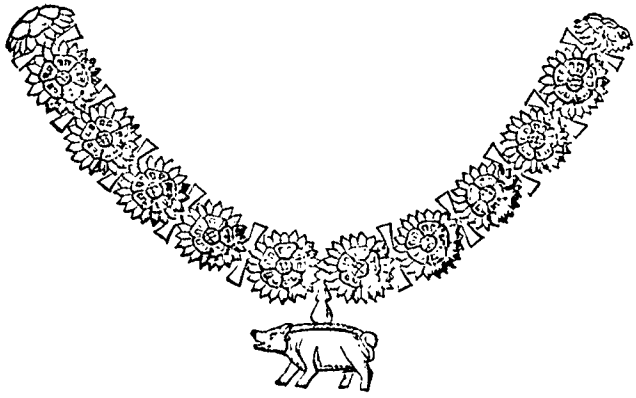
[1] Query, as to this word, it being not perfect in the original?

[2] Quinzieme Pasche, the fifteenth day after Easter.

[3] Sir Peter Ardern, knight, was Chief Baron of the Exchequer, &c.

[4] This was either some coloured ribbon, or, most probably, a collar with the king's device. Collars were at this time generally worn by persons of consequence, and by the fashion and form of them the rank of the wearer was intended to be ascertained; they were usually formed of SS, having on the centre before, a rose or some other device, and were made either of gold or silver, according to the rank, dignity, or fortune of the wearer. By an act "For Reformation of Excess of Apparel," passed in the 24 H. VIII. 1532, ch. 13, it was enacted, "that no man, unless he be a knight, wear any collar of gold, named a collar of SS." This collar, therefore, from that time became the distinguishing badge of knighthood. [We give, as an illustration, a badge or collar worn by the friends of Richard, drawn by the late C. Stothard from an effigy of Ralph, second Earl of Westmoreland, in Brancepeth church, Durham.

[5] [Fenn has *see punished*. The original is as above given, and means that he wills they be somewhat punished.]



LETTER CCXXV.—(XIX. vol. i. p. 285.)

To my right reverend and worshipful father, John Paston, dwelling in Caister, be this delivered.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful father, I recommend me unto you, beseeching you lowly of your blessing, desiring to hear of your welfare and prosperity, the which I pray God preserve unto his pleasance, and to your heart's desire; beseeching you to have me excused that ye had no writing from me since that I departed from you, for so God me help, I sent you a letter to London anon (*soon*) after Candlemas by a man of my lord's; and he forgot to deliver it to you, so he brought to me the letter again; and since that time I could get no messenger till now.

As for tidings such as we have here I send you.

My lord and my lady[1] are in good hele (*health*), blessed be God, and my lord hath great labour and cost here in Wales for to take diverse gentlemen here which were consenting and helping unto the Duke of Somerset's going; and they were appealed (*accused*) of other certain points of treason; and this matter, and because the king sent my lord word to keep this country, is (*the*) cause that my lord tarrieth here thus long; and now the king hath given my lord power whether he will do execution upon these gentlemen or pardon them, whether that him list (*pleaseth*), and as far forth as I can understand yet, they shall have grace, and as soon as these men be come in my lord is purposed to come to London, which I suppose shall be within this fortnight; the men's names that be impeached are these, John Hanmer, and William his son, Roger Puleston, and Edward of Madoc, these be men of worship that shall come in.

The commons in Lancashire and Cheshire were up to the number of 10,000 or more, but now they be down again; and one or two of them was headed in Chester as on Saturday last past.

Thomas Daniel is here in Cheshire, but I wot not in what place; he hath sent three or four letters to Sir John Howard, since my lord came hither.

And other tidings have we none here but that I suppose ye have heard before; I suppose verily that it shall be so nigh Easter ere ever my lord come to London, that I shall not move[2] (*to*) come home to you before Easter; wherefore I beseech you that ye will vouchsafe that one of your men may send a bill to mine uncle Clement, or to some other man, who that ye will, in your name, that they may deliver me the money that I am behind of the quarter since Christmas; and for the next quarter, in part of that sum that it pleased you to grant me by the year; for by my truth the fellowship have not so much money as we wend (*thought*) to have had by right much; for my lord hath had great costs since he came hither.

Wherefore I beseech you that I may have this money at Easter,[3] for I have borrowed money that I must pay again after Easter.

And I pray Almighty God have you in keeping.

Written in the castle of the Holt, in Wales, the first day of March.

Your son and lowly servant,

JOHN PASTON, *the youngest.*

Holt Castle,
Denbighshire,
1st March, 1463-4. 3 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXVI.—(XLVI. vol. iv. p. 165.)

Though this letter contains nothing very interesting, yet as it mentions the commission of the peace, and gives some account of a law process, I have thought proper to present it to the reader. It mentions likewise the offensive and defensive armour, &c., then in use; and concludes with some very serious and pressing advice to J. Paston to conclude his own intricate business relative to Sir John Fastolf's property, &c.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston the oldest, be this delivered in haste.

I recommend me, &c.

IF it please you, I would right fain that John Jenney were put out of the commission of the peace, and that my brother William Lumnor

[1] John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, and Elizabeth Duchess of Norfolk.

[2] [So Fenn: but we think *moue* is *mowe*, be able.

[3] In 1464, Easter Sunday fell on the 25th March.

were set in his stead, for me thinketh it were right necessary that there were such a man in that county that oweth you good will, and I know verily he oweth you right good will: he was with me at Caister but late. If there be made any labour for Doctor Allen to be justice of the peace, I pray you for God's sake let it be letted if ye may, for he will take too much upon him if he were; I would not that he were remembered of your part, but if (*unless*) he be spoken of of other parts; he is right great with Master Philip Lypzate and the bailiff of Cossey.

If it please you to weet that Wykes did arrest one William Dylmyn of Norwich, as Pampynge can inform you of, for certain harness which he delivered him at Newcastle for to carry to Yarmouth by water, and there to deliver it to him again, which harness he kept still, and may not be delivered; and now there is come down an habeas corpus for him, and (*he*) must appear at the common place on Friday next coming; wherefore if it pleased you that there might be taken an action in Wykes's name of trespass, under such form as there may be a capias awarded against his coming; for after that he was arrested he did (*caused*) Daubeney to be arrested for maintaining;[1] and as for the harness, Wykes delivered it to him the 10th day of January, the 2nd year of King Edward IV. (1462), in Pilgrim-street, at Newcastle; imprimis a pair (*of*) brigauders, a salet [*light helmet and visor*], a boar-spear, a bow, eighteen arrows, two pair (*of*) pauldrons (*shoulder-pieces*), a standard of mail, a pair (*of*) sleeves of plate, to the value of five marks (*3l. 6s. 8d.*)

And at the reverence of God sloth not your matters now, and make an end of them; either purvey you to make them or to mar them in haste, for this is too horrible a cost and trouble that ye have and have had for to endure any while, and it is great heaviness to your friends and well-willers and great joy and comfort to your enemies.

My Lord of Norwich said to me that he would not abide the sorrow and trouble that ye have abiden to win all Sir John Fastolf's good. God be your speed in all your matters. Written at Heylesdon the 13th day of May.

I think right long to hear tidings till I have tidings from you.

Your

MARGARET PASTON.

13th of May,
between 1463 and 1465.
3 and 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXVII.—(XLVII. vol. iv. p. 169.)

No one can read this letter without feeling concern for the displeasure that Sir John had occasioned his mother by his improper departure; she tenderly blames his conduct, gives him the advice of a kind, affectionate and sensible parent, and at the same time is anxious to hear of his welfare. Her account of Jane Walsham's regard for Wykes is natural and pleasing, and interests the reader in her behalf. The whole letter is written in a clear and easy style, and shows the maternal affection of the writer for her son.

To my well-beloved son, Sir John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that I have received a letter from you the which ye delivered to Master Roger at Lynn, whereby I conceive that ye think ye did not well that ye departed hence without my knowledge, wherefore I let you weet I was right evil paid[2] with you; your father thought, and thinketh yet, that I was assented to your departing, and that hath caused me to have great heaviness; I hope he will be your good father hereafter if ye demean you well, and do as ye ought to do to him; and I charge you upon my blessing that in anything touching your father that should be (*to*) his worship, profit, or avail, that ye do your devoir and diligent labour to the furtherance therein as ye will have my good will, and that shall cause your father to be better father to you.

It was told me ye sent him a letter to London; what the intent thereof was I wot not, but though he take it but lightly, I would ye should not spare to write to him again as

[1] [Maintenance. See Letter cxxiii. p. 103.]
[2] [Appayed—content.]

lowly as ye can, beseeching him to be your good father; and send him such tidings as be in the country there ye beeth, and that ye ware [*guard*] of your expenses better and (*than*) ye have been before this time, and be your own purse-bearer; I trow ye shall find it most profitable to you.

I would ye should send me word how ye do, and how ye have shifted for yourself since ye departed hence, by some trusty man, and that your father have no knowledge thereof; I durst not let him know of the last letter that ye wrote to me, because he was so sore displeased with me at that time.

Item, I would ye should speak with Wykes, and know his disposition to Jane Walsham; she hath said since he departed hence but (*unless*) she might have him she would never (*be*) married, her heart is sore set on him; she told me that he said to her that there was no woman in the world he loved so well; I would not he should jape (*deceive*) her, for she meaneth good faith; and if he will not have her let me weet in haste, for I shall purvey for her in other wise.

As for your harness and gear that ye left here, it is in Daubeney's keeping; it was never removed since your departing because that he had not the keys; I trow it shall apeyer (*grow worse*) but if (*unless*) it be taken heed at betimes; your father knoweth not where it is.

I sent your grey horse to Ruston to the farrier, and he saith he shall never be nought to ride neither right good to plough nor to cart; he said he was splayed, and his shoulder rent from the body; I wot not what to do with him.

Your grandam would fain hear some tidings from you; it were well done that ye sent a letter to her how ye do as hastily as ye may, and God have you in his keeping, and make you a good man, and give you grace to do well as I would ye should do.

Written at Caister, the Tuesday next before Saint Edmund the king (*20th of November*).

Your mother,

MARGARET PASTON.

I would ye should make much of the parson of Filby, the bearer hereof, and make him good cheer if ye may.

Caister, Tuesday, November,
between 1463 and 1466. 3 and 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXVIII.—(XLVIII. vol. iv. p. 173.)

It is very difficult to fix any date to this letter, as not only the writer of it, but the persons mentioned in it, are new to us. The injury sustained by T. Daverse from Pinchester is likewise inexplicable. Who is Lady Anne P.?—and how are we to explain the expression "as white as whale's bone?" The mention of Ovid's works is curious, and the application humorous and witty. The subscription to this letter is T. D., which is explained by "T. Daverse" being written under the direction. I believe by the hand of the receiver. The family of Davers were of considerable standing in the county of Suffolk, and advanced to the dignity of baronet in 1682.

To my right good master, Sir John Paston, knight.

My right special good master, I recommend me to you, thanking you right heartily of your gentle letter late sent to me; and as to Pinchester's matter, &c. I would I were your nigh kinsman if it pleased God, and then should I know if it should grieve your heart as much as it doth other of my kin and friends to see me thus cowardly hurt by Pinchester causeless; and of mine intent in that matter William Rabbes shall tell you more; also I beseech you to recommend me to my lord's good grace, as to him whom of earthly estates next my duty I most love and dread, and that should he well know and it lay in my power, praying you heartily to declare (*to*) his lordship such matter as William Rabbes shall inform you, and to send me my lord's answer.

Also inasmuch as I understood by you that money should cause you conclusion in your matter this next term, and ye will be at London on Monday at night or Tuesday by noon, I trust that I have studied such a mean, that, upon surety as ye may make, to get you an hundred pounds or two hundred marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) to be lent unto you for an half year, without any chevisance [1] or loss of

[1] [*Chevisance*—an agreement or composition, as an order set down between a creditor and his debtor. It seems here used for usury.]

goods by you, as William Rabbes shall tell you more, &c.

And as to Ovid 'De Arte Amandi,' I shall send him you the next week, for I have him not now ready; but me thinketh Ovid 'De Remedio' were more meet for you, but if (*unless*) ye purposed to fall hastily in my Lady Anne P.'s lap as white as whale's bone, &c. Ye be the best chooser of a gentlewoman that I know, &c.; and I pray you to recommend me to my Lord[1] of Oxford, and to my good masters, Needham, Richmond, Chippenham, Stavely, Bloxham, Stuard, and Ingulton in special, and all other good masters and friends in general, &c. And, Sir, Mistress Gaydade recommend me (*q. her*) to you and said bussing fare for charity, and she said (*to*) me she would fain have a new fillet, &c.

Written at London the 29th day in January,

With heart and service,

Your THOMAS DAVERSE.

London, 29 January,
between 1463 and 1469.
3 and 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXIX.—(XLIX. vol. iv. p. 177.)

This letter was written in 1464, about the time that King Henry VI. was taken and committed to the Tower, an order having been issued in May for the subjects of this kingdom to take arms and attend King Edward. The Commission of Inquiry seems to relate to this order, which most probably was enforced for the more easy discovery of the unfortunate prince, who perhaps was by this time lodged in the Tower, as those gentlemen who had obeyed it were now dismissed and returned home.

To mine right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me unto you; pleaseth you to weet that I sent yesterday Loveday to Norwich to speak with the vicar of Dereham[2] for the matter between Master Constantine and him, and he saith that as for that matter Master Constantine sued him for faith and truth breaking, and he sued Master Constantine in the temporal court upon an obligation of ten pounds; and there was made an appointment between them, by the advice of both their counsels, before Master Robert Popy, that each of them should release other, and so they did, and the sureties were withdrawn on both parties, and each of them acquittanced other: and as for any copy of the plea he had never none, nor he, nor Master John Estgate, that was his attorney remembereth not that it was registered; and Master John Estgate saith, if it should be searched in the register it would take a fortnight's work, and yet peradventure never be the nearer.

Sir Thomas Howes[3] hath been right busy this week at Blofield in writing and looking up of gear, and John Russe hath been with him there the most part of all this week, and this day was Robert Lynne there with him; what they have done I wot not, but I shall weet if I may.

It was told me that Sir Thomas desired of John Russe to make him a new inventory of Sir John Fastolf's goods; John Russe might not be spoken with yet for the letter that he should have written which ye sent me word of.

Item, it is told that the Duke of Suffolk[4] is come home, and either he is dead, or else right sick, and not like to escape; and Sir John Howard is come home; and it is said that the Lord Scales and he have a commission to inquire why they of this country that were sent for came not hastilier up after they were sent for. It is reported that the king is greatly displeased therewith.

At the reverence of God arm yourself as mightily ye can against your enemies,[5] for I know verily that they will do again you as mightily as they can with all their power.

It is told me that Sir Thomas shall come up in haste, and other such as he can make for his party.

Also for God's sake beware what medicines

[1] [Fenn by mistake gives *Lady*.]

[2] Constantine Dalby was instituted to the vicarage of East Dereham, in 1451, and was succeeded in 1456, by Robert Sheringham.

[3] J. Paston and Thomas Howes had at this time disagreed about executorship of Sir J. Fastolf's will.

[4] John Duke of Suffolk did not die till 1491.

[5] These may either mean those enemies which the affairs of Sir John Fastolf had caused him, or those which the national disputes had occasioned.

ye take of any physicians of London;[1] I shall never trust to them because of your father and mine uncle, whose souls God assoil!

The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you health and good speed in all your matters. Written in haste, on the Friday next before St. Barnabas.

By yours, MARGARET PASTON.

All the gentlemen of this country that went up to the king are countermanded, and are come home again. It is told me that Rous of Suffolk is dead;[2] if John Gayn might have any release of his son, if it might do him ease, it were a good turn for him.

Friday, 8th June,
1464. 4 E. IV.

NUMBER CCXXX.—(L. vol. iv. p. 183.)

From this appointment of the king it appears that grants for foundations of religious establishments were made one mean of raising money for the service of the crown; and that the royal protection was likewise obtained by a present of money or plate. Whether the terms by which the king's favour was now to be procured were fulfilled by John Paston, or whether his majesty had any reasons for withdrawing his protection, does not appear, but in the following year the royal favour was forfeited, and J. Paston was a prisoner by the king's command. During this year the king was moving from place to place, and by condescension and affability acquiring popularity.

Appointment of the king for the foundation of a college at Caister, &c.

THE king, for the sum of 300 marks (200*l.*) of lawful money of England, or of silver plate to the value thereof, granteth to John Paston the elder, Esquire, to have licence lawfully made, to make and found a college of seven priests, and seven poor folk at Caister, in Flegg (*hundred*) in Norfolk, for the soul of Sir John Fastolf, knight; they to be endued with certain rent and otherwise, after the intent and effect as is specified in a bill thereof signed by the king; and that he shall show his good grace, favour, and assistance to have the said foundation enacted and authorized in the parliament next holden, and discharge the said John Paston and the said priests of any other fine or fee to be made in the Chancery for the said foundation, and that the king shall sign and grant warrants for said licence, and show his good grace and favour in the expedition thereof, what time he be sued to therefore by the said John Paston.

Also, the king granteth to be good and favourable lord to the said John Paston, and in especial in all things touching the execution of the will of the said Sir John Fastolf, and also to be good and favourable lord to the said John Paston in supporting and helping him in that the king's highness may lawfully do, in such matters as are in debate atwixt the said John Paston and William Yelverton, or William Jenney, or any other, concerning the lands and tenements, goods or chattels, that were the said Sir John Fastolf's; also the king granteth to help and support the said John Paston to obtain and have to the use of the said Sir John Fastolf, such goods as were the said Fastolf's, deceitfully aloyned (*removed*) out of the possession and knowledge of the said John Paston, and that the king shall grant the said John Paston such lawful writings and letters from the king, directed to such persons as shall be behoveful for the same, what time the said John Paston sueth to the king's highness therefore.

Also where Yelverton or Jenney, or any justice of the peace of the shire of Suffolk, hath recorded any riot, trespass, or offences to be done against the king's peace by the said John Paston, his servants, or tenants, or friends; or where any indictment or presentment is found against them, or any of them, before any of the said justices, for any such riot, offences, trespass, or for any other matter remaining of record in the King's Bench, or in any other place, the king granteth to the said John Paston, and all other persons named in the said records or indictments, or in any of them, and to all their boroughs (*sureties*) and pledges, and to each of them that will sue it,

[1] How her father and her uncle had suffered from London physicians does not appear.

[2] Reginald Rous, Esq. of Dennington, in Suffolk, died in 1464.

a pardon of all riots, trespasses, offences, felonies, forfeitures done against the king's peace, and of fines therefore dempt (*adjudged*) or to be dempt, and of all other things generally, treason except, and that the king shall sign warrants lawful of the said pardons, what time his highness be required by the said John Paston or his attorneys.

And also that his highness shall do (*cause*) inquiry and examination (*to*) be made whether the said record of the said justices, and presentments and other informations or complaints made against the said John Paston, were done truly and lawfully or not; and if it be found that they were done otherwise than truth, law, or conscience will, then the king granteth to cause the doers thereof to recompense the said John Paston, and the said other persons, as far as law and good conscience will in that behalf.

And that if it fortune any complaint to be made against the said John Paston, by any person in time coming, to the king, that he shall take no displeasure to the said John Paston till the time he come to his answer and be found in default.

And that the king shall receive 100*l.* of the said 300 marks what time he send for it, and the remanent as soon as the said foundation take effect; and also that his highness shall get the assent of the reverend father in God the Archbishop of Canterbury, in such appointments as is made atwixt the king and the said John Paston of such goods as were the said Sir John Fastolf's, for the delivery thereof, and that if the said John Paston refuse the administration of the goods and chattels that were the said Sir John Fastolf's, suffering other to take it upon them, the king, at the instance of the said John Paston, granteth to be good and favourable lord to such other as (*by*) the course of the law, and assent of the said John Paston, shall take the said administration in execution of the said Fastolf's will, touching the administration of the goods and chattels aforesaid, according to the same will; and that the king shall not claim nor desire any of the lands or tenements, goods or chattels that were the said Sir John Fastolf's against the said John Paston or any other executor, administrator, or feoffee of the said Sir John Fastolf, nor support or favour any other person in claiming any of the said lands or tenements, goods or chattels, against any of the said administrators, executors, or feoffees.

Also the king granteth that whereas this bill is not sufficiently made in clauses and terms according to the intent thereof, that his highness will take and execute the very intent thereof, notwithstanding the insufficience of any such terms and clauses in this bill. Written at Marlborough, the Monday next after the nativity of our Lady, the fourth year of the reign of the king.

Marlborough, Wiltshire,
Monday, 10th of September,
1464. 4 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXXI.—(LI. vol. iv. p. 189.)

The exact year when this letter was written cannot be determined, but it must have been during J. Paston's troubles in the latter part of his life, between 1464 and 1466.

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, praying you to weet that I have spoken with Strange's wife of the matter that ye spoken to me of, and she saith plainly to me by her faith that she knew never none such, nor never heard of none such, and told to me in like wise as she had said to James Gloys, and she said to me if she could inquire of any other that she thought should have knowledge of any such, she should weten of them, and letten me have knowledge thereof; and if ye suppose that any other be in this country that ye think should have knowledge of this foresaid matter, if ye will send me word thereof I shall do my part therein.

Also I have been at Swainsthorp and spoken with Kokett and he saith that he will do like as ye bade me that I should say to him for to do. And I have spoken with the sexteyn (*sexton*), and said to him as ye bade me that I should do, and he asked me right faithfully how ye sped in your matters.

I told him that ye had fair behests, and I

said I hoped that ye should do right well therein; and he said he supposed that D——[1] would do for you; but he said he was no hasty labourer in none matter; he said by his faith he wist where a man was that laboured to him for a matter right a long time, and always he behested that he would labour it effectually; but while he sued to him he could never have remedy of his matter, and then when he thought that he should no remedy have to sue to him, he spake with Fynes,[2] that is now Speaker of the parliament, and prayed him that he would do for him in his matter, and gave him a reward; and within right short time after his matter was sped; and the said sexteyn[3] and other folks that be your right well-willers have counselled me that I should counsel you to make other means than ye have made to other folks, that would speed your matters better than they have done that ye have spoken to thereof before this time. Sundry folks have said to me that they think verily but if (*unless*) ye have my Lord of Suffolk's[4] good lordship, while the werd (*world*) is as it is, ye can never live in peace without ye have his good lordship; therefore I pray you with all mine heart that ye will do your part to have his good lordship and his love in ease of all those matters that ye have to do, and in easing of mine heart also, for by my truth I am afraid else, both of these matters the which ye have in hand now, and of other that be not done to yet, but if (*unless*) he will do for you and be your good lord. I pray you heartily send me word how ye do, and how ye speed in your matters; and I pray you as for such things as James hath a bill of, that I may have them as hastily as ye may; and that ye will vouchsafe to buy a piece of black buckram for to line with a gown for me, I should buy me a murrey gown to go in this summer, and lay in the collar the satin that ye gave me for an hood; and I can get none good buckram in this town to line it with. The holy Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you health and good speed in all your matters.

Written at Norwich, on the Friday next after Crouchmas day.[5]

Yours, MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich Friday,
May, between 1464 and 1466.
4 and 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXXII.—(LII. vol. iv. p. 195.)

This letter discovers to us some of the politics of the times, probably when the Earl of Warwick had taken displeasure at the king's marriage, and informs us that the Yorkists were fearful that too much lenity might be shown to the Lancastrians: to what good lord Margaret Paston and her husband wished her cousin Rookwood to be faithful is not mentioned, it probably was to the Duke of Norfolk. We find also that the exportation of wool was [considered] an hardship upon the poor, who by that means were deprived of work in that branch of the manufacture which affected their spinning, &c.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; pleaseth it you to weet that I received your letter that ye sent me by Nicholas Colman on Sunday last past; and as for the matter that ye desired me to break of to my cousin Rookwood, it fortuned so that he came to me on Sunday to dinner, soon after that I had your letter, and when we had dined, I

[1] Perhaps this may mean John Damme, a person often mentioned in these letters, and who was member of parliament for the city of Norwich in 1451.

[2] It does not appear what relation this Fynes was to Sir Richard Fynes, who married Joan, daughter and heir of Lord Dacre of the south, by which title in her right he was summoned to parliament in 1459. The reward given to Fynes seems previous to his being elected Speaker. [He was doubtless a lawyer, like Damme, and the reward was his fee.]

[3] The sacrist or sexton of the priory of Norwich, was the officer who had the care of the sacra or holy things, as the church plate, copes, &c.; he was likewise secretary, auditor, and chancellor of the convent, and had a subsacrist or deputy to perform the servile parts of his office. In 1444 Brother Richard de Walsham was appointed sacrist.

[4] John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk.

[5] Crouchmas day, or the Invention of the Cross, was on the 3d of May.

moved to him thereof in covert terms, as Playters shall inform you hereafter; and as I thought by him, and so did Playters also, by the language that he had to us, that he would be as faithful as he could or might be to that good lord that ye wrote of, and to you also, in anything that he could or might do, in case were that he were set in office so that he might aught do, and thereto he said he would be bound in 1000*l.*, and (*if*) he was so much worth.

As for the other that ye desired I should move to of the same matter, me seemeth he is too young to take any such things upon him, and also I know verily that he shall never love faithfully the other man that ye desired that he should do, for when he remembereth the time that is past; and therefore I spake not to him thereof.

This day was holden a great day at Okyll (*Acle*) before the under-sheriff and the under-escheator for the matter of Sir John Fastolf's lands, and there was my cousin Rookwood, and my cousin John Berney of Reedham, and divers other gentlemen and thrifty men of the country, and the matter is well sped after your intent, blessed be God! as ye shall have knowledge of in haste.

I suppose Playters shall be with you on Sunday or on Monday next coming if he may; ye have many good prayers of the poor people that God should speed you at this parliament, for they live in hope that ye should help to set a way that they might live in better peace in this country than they have done before, and that wools should be purveyed for that they should not go out of this land, as it hath been suffered to do before, and then shall the poor people more live better than they have done by their occupation therein. Thomas Bone hath sold all your wool here for 20*d.* a stone, and good surety found to you therefore to be paid at Michaelmas next coming, and it is sold right well after that,[1] (*because*) the wool was for the most part right feeble.

Item, there be bought for you three horses at St. Faith's[2] fair, and all be trotters, right fair horses, God save them, and they be well keeped.

Item, your mills at Heylesdon be let for twelve marks (8*l.*) and the miller to find the reparation; and Richard Calle hath let all your lands at Caister; but as for Maultby lands they be not let yet. William White hath paid me again this day his 10*l.*, and I have made him an acquittance thereof because I had not his obligation.

There is great talking in this country of the desire of my Lord of York,[3] the people report full worshipfully of my Lord of Warwick, they have no fear here but that he and other should show too great favour to them that have been rulers of this country before time.

I have done all your errands to Sir Thomas Howes that ye wrote to me for; I am right glad that ye have sped well in your matters betwixt Sir Philip Wentworth and you, and so I pray God ye may do in all other matters to his pleasance.

As for the writings that ye desired that Playters should send you, Richard Calle told me that they were at Harry Barber's, at the Temple Gate.

The mayor[4] and the mayoress sent hither their dinners this day, and John Damme came with them, and they dined here; I am beholden to them for they have sent to me divers times since ye yed (*went*) hence; the mayor saith that there is no gentleman in Norfolk that he would do more for than he would for you, if it lay in his power to do for you.

J. Perse[5] is still in prison, but he will not

[1] [At that, *i.e.* price, as we say now.]

[2] [Near Norwich. There is still a considerable fair at this place, but chiefly for lean cattle.]

[3] George Nevile became Archbishop of York in 1464, and died in 1476.

[4] As the exact date of the year of this letter cannot be ascertained, we cannot determine who this mayor of Norwich was, though it must have been either John Gilbert, Thomas Ellis, or John Chytock. John Damme had been the recorder, and might perhaps be so now. [This is a curious trait—the mayor and mayoress of Norwich send their own dinners to a gentleman's house where they go to dine; nor is it noticed as anything out of the common course; indeed, "they have sent to me divers times" may imply that they sent dinners.]

[5] What offence Perse had committed does not appear, nor can I understand the expression "that the dede may have part of hys own goode." An ingenious friend suggested the following explanation: might not Perse have murdered some one and secreted

confess more than he did when ye were at home. Edmund Brome was with me, and told me that Perse sent for him for to come speak with him, and he told me that he was with him and examined him, but he would not be a knowe (*acknowledge*) to him, that he had no knowledge where no goods was of his master's more than he had knowledged to you; he told me that he sent for him to desire him to labour to you and to me for him if ye had been at home; and he told me that he said to him again that he would never labour for him but (*unless*) he might know that he were true to his master, though it lay in his power to do right much for him; I suppose it should do none harm though the said Perse were removed further. I pray to God give grace that the truth may be known, and that the dead may have part of his own goods, and the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping.

Written in haste, at Heylesdon, the Tuesday next after St. Luke.

By yours, MARGARET PASTON.

Heylesdon,
Tuesday, October,
between 1464 and 1466.
4 and 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXXIII.—(LIII. vol. iv. p. 201.)

I have given this letter as containing not only the whole process of a replevin, but likewise to show the disagreeable situation the tenants of the lands and manors were put into when the landlords and lords of manors disagreed. Drayton and Heylesdon had been the manors of Sir John Fastolf, and were now by his death in the possession of John Paston, as one of his executors and trustees; this letter therefore must have been written after Sir John's decease. A replevin is a writ (*Replegiare de averiis*) brought by one whose cattle are distrained or put in pound upon any cause by another, upon surety given to the sheriff to pursue or answer the action at law.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

PLEASE it you to weet that on Saturday last your servants Naunton, Wykes, and others were at Drayton, and there took a distress for the rent and farm that was to pay, to the number of seventy-seven neat (*beasts*), and so brought them home to Heylesdon, and put them in the pin-fold, and so kept them still there from the said Saturday morning unto Monday three at clock at afternoon. First on the same Saturday the tenants followed upon, and desired to have their cattle again: and I answered them if they would do pay such dewts (*debts* or *dues*) as they ought for to pay to you, that then they should have their cattle delivered again; or else if they were not a power (*were not able*) to pay ready money, that then they to find sufficient surety to pay the money at such a day as they might agree with me, and thereto to be bounden to you by obligation; and that they said they durst not for to take upon them for to be bounden, and as for money they had none for to pay at that time, and therefore I kept still the beasts.

Harleston was at Norwich, and sent for the tenants the said Saturday at afternoon, and there, by the means of the bailiff of Cossey, put the tenants in such fear, saying that if they would pay such debts, or else for to be bounden to pay, that then they would put them out of such lands as they held bondly of the lordship, and so to distrain them and trouble them that they should be weary of their part; and that put them (*in*) such fear that they durst neither pay nor be bounden.

And on the Sunday at even-song time Harleston came to me to Heylesdon, desiring me that I would deliver again the said distress; and as for such distresses as they had taken here of your tenants (*they*) should be delivered again in like form; and I said I would not deliver them so, and I told him that I would deliver them as is written afore and otherwise not,

his goods, which he refuses to acknowledge, but part of which, if they had been discovered, would have been disposed of for the benefit of the soul of the deceased, in procuring masses, &c., to be sung for him, so that in fact by these means *the dead might be said to have part of his own goods?* This explanation will appear perhaps far-fetched, but it is adduced solely with a hope that it might prove a clue to a discovery of the real meaning of this passage. [A murderer Perse could not have been from the terms in which they speak of him, and the way in which he seeks for assistance. But he might have been servant to some one who had died, and have been suspected of secreting his master's goods.]

and otherwise I would not deliver them but by the form of law. And other communication was had between us at that time of divers matters which were too long to write at this time, but ye shall have knowledge thereof in haste.

And on Monday next after at nine at clock there came Pynchemore to Heylesdon with a replevin, which was made in Harleston's name as under-steward of the duchy, saying that the beasts were taken upon the duchy fee, wherefore he desired me to make him livery of the said beasts so taken; and I said I would not deliver them unto the time that I had examined the tenants of the truth, and so I sent thither Wykes with Pynchemore to understand what they would say; and the tenants said that there was taken none upon the duchy at their knowledge, save only Pyrse Waryn the younger, and Paynter, said that their cattle was taken upon the duchy, which they cannot prove by none record save only by their own saying; and so we would not obey that replevin and so they departed; and at three at clock at afternoon Pynchemore came to Heylesdon again with two men which brought with them a replevin from the sheriff, whose names be John Witherley and Robert Ranson, which required me by the same replevin to make them delivery of the said beasts taken at Drayton; and so I, seeing the sheriff's replevin and under his seal, bade my men deliver them, and so they were delivered.

And as for all other matters that ye have written to (*me*) of, I will speed me to send you an answer as hastily as I may, for I may no leisure have to write no more to you this time. The blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Heylesdon the 20th day of May

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Heylesdon,
Monday, 20th of May,
1465. 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXXIV.—(LIV. vol. iv. p. 207.)

The beginning of this letter is curious, at it furnishes us with an account of the process to dispossess a parson of his church; what Flowerdew had done to incur deprivation does not appear. John Flowerdew was instituted to the rectory of Drayton on the 15th of March, 1461, on the presentation of John Paston, Esq. and Thomas Howes, clerk. At the time that this and the foregoing letter was written, there was a dispute between the executors of Sir John Fastolf and the Duke of Suffolk concerning these estates at Drayton, Heylesdon, &c.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; please it you to weet that I have sent to Master John Smyth and to Master Stephen to have advice for the church of Drayton; and they send me word that there must be had a commission from the bishop to call in the Parson Flowerdew, and that must be proclaimed in the church of Drayton three times by a dean,[1] and after that if he appear not within six months after the first proclamation, that then he for to be deprived, and the patron to present whom he lust (*lists*), and else your presentation is not sufficient. And I have so purveyed that a commission is had, and shall be served as hastily as it may be.

As for John Rysing I have sent to him to weet the cause that he is not brought up to London, and he saith that he called upon the sheriff that he might be had up for (*to*) come to his answer, and the sheriff told him that he would not bring him up at his own cost; and John Andrews said that he would not have him up, and so he is still in prison at Ipswich, and so shall he be but if (*unless*) ye can find the better mean for to have him out; I have sent to him 13*s.* 4*d.* to help himself therewith, he payeth for his board weekly twenty-pence; and Hopton and Smith be there still also, and they have money enough wheresoever that they have it; Rysing deemeth that they have comfort of the other party; and I send you the copy of the warrant that they were arrested by, &c.

I spake not with my mother since Richard

[1] This means the rural dean.

Calle brought me the letter from you touching her matter, for I might have no leisure; when I speak with her at leisure I will remember her in that matter according to your writing; and as for your tenants of Drayton, as I can understand by them, they be right good and true-hearted to you to their powers, and full fain would that ye had it again in peace, for they had as leffe (*lief*) almost be tenants to the devil as to the Duke, except Will. Herne, Piers at Sloth, and one Knott of the same town, for they be not good.

All your tenants at Heylesdon and Drayton, except these three, be right glad that we are there amongst them, and so be many others of our old neighbours and friends; and but if (*unless*) ye come home by Wednesday or Thursday[1] in Whitsun week, I purpose me to see you in secret wise by Trinity Sunday[2] but if (*unless*) ye send to me contrary commandment ere that time; and I pray you send me your advice how ye will that we do against the next shire, which shall be the Monday next after Trinity Sunday, as for calling upon the replevin that the beasts of Drayton were delivered by.

Item, Richard Calle told me that ye desired to have Master Philip's name, and his name is Philip Lypzate, and I sent you a letter by Henry Wilton's man wherein I wrote Master Philip's name; and in the same letter I wrote to you for Will. Lumnor; I pray you send me word if ye have it, and the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping. Written the Monday next after Ascension day.[3]

By yours, MARGARET PASTON.

Monday, 27th of May,
1465. 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXXV.—(LV. vol. iv. p. 213.)

This and the following letter, giving an account of the proceedings of the Duke of Suffolk's men at Heylesdon, of their attempts there, and of the steps taken by those in possession to oppose them, exhibit a true picture of the times, when the numerous fellowships of the great men, sometimes with and sometimes without the knowledge of their lords, attacked the smaller fellowships of their inferior neighbours, either on a pretence of having some title to their estates, or under colour of having warrants to apprehend them on civil suits, or on prosecutions for felonies, &c.

To my master, John Paston, in haste.

PLEASETH it your mastership to weet of the rule and disposition of the M—— Philip[4] and the bailiff of Cossey, with others of my Lord of Suffolk's men, on Monday last past at afternoon (*who*) were at Heylesdon with the number of three hundred men for to have entered, notwithstanding they said they came not for to enter, but without doubt and (*if*) they had been strong enough for us they would have entered, and that we understand now; but we knowing of their coming, and purveyed so for them, that we were strong enough; we had sixty men within the place, and guns, and such ordnance, so that if they had set upon us they had been destroyed; and there my mistress[5] was within, and my master Sir John, and (*he*) hath gotten him as great worship for that day as any gentleman might do, and so is it reported of the party and in all Norwich; and my Lord of Norwich[6] sent thither Master John Salett and Master John Bulleman for to treat, and so they did; and the duke's men said they had a warrant for to attach John Daubeney, Wykes, Calle, Hunworth, and Blickling, and other, which they would have, and my master Sir John answered them and said that they were not within, and though we had been they should not have had them; and so they desired one of our men, and so Naunton stood by my mistress and asked them whom they would have, and said if they would have

[1] 5th or 6th of June. [2] 9th of June.
[3] 23rd of May.
[4] This does not clearly point out the person. [Is it not the Philip Lipzate whose name is given in the preceding letter? We are inclined to think, also, that the M. before Philip does not in this place stand for *master*, but for the place, probably *manor*, in which case the subsequent interpolation of *who* becomes unnecessary.]
[5] We have often seen Margaret Paston in the character of wife, mother, and friend, but this is the first time of her appearance as the governess of a fortress, for such this may now be called.
[6] Walter Lyhart, bishop of Norwich.

him he would go with them, and so he did, and on the next day they carried him forth to my Lord of Suffolk to Claxton, through Norwich, and there we had found a remedy for him for to have let [*hindered* or *stayed*] him, and he would not, but needs go forth with them; but like a gentleman he was entreated amongst them. And Harleston desired at Heylesdon to speak with my master Sir John, and so he did, and said to him it were right well done that he rode to my Lord of Suffolk, and desired him in any wise that he should do so, and said that it was his duty so for to do, inasmuch as my lord was come to (*the*) country, and that he would ride with him and bring him to my lord; and he answered and said to him, when that he understood that my lord were his father's good lord and his, that then he would see his lordship, and else he had none errand to him; and so they departed; and then appointment was taken that they should send home their men, and we should send home ours; and now my Lord of Suffolk's men come from Claxton to Norwich, and face us and fray upon us thus daily; there fell upon me before Swaine's door twelve of his men, eight of them in harness, and there they would have mischieved me, and the sheriff letted (*hindered*) hem and other, and they make their avaunt were [*wherever*] that I may be gotten I should die, and so they lie in await for to mischief me, Daubeney, and Wykes; and so I dare not ride out alone without a man with me; and I understand there is coming an oyer (*and*) determiner to inquire of all riots, and my Lord of Suffolk and Yelverton be commissioners; and so they say as many of us as can be taken shall be indicted and hanged forthwith; and so the people here are dismayed with their rule, wherefore that it like you to send word how my mistress shall do at Heylesdon, and we in all other matters; and whether ye will that we fetch again the flock of Heylesdon, for they are now driven to Causton, and there go they on the heath; and my Lord of Suffolk will be at Drayton on Lammas day, and keep the court there, wherefore ye must seek a remedy for it or else it will not do well.

If my Lord of Norfolk [1] would come he should make all well, for they fear him above all things, for it is noised here that my Lord of Norfolk hath taken party in this matter, and all the country is glad of it, saying that if he come they will wholly go with him.

And me seemeth it were well done to move my lord in it though ye should give him the profits of Heylesdon and Drayton for the keeping, and some money beside; for ye must seek some other remedy than ye do, or else in my conceit it shall go to the devil and be destroyed, and that in right short time, and therefore at the reverence of God take some appointment with Master Yelverton, and such as ye think should most hurt.

I beseech you to pardon me of my writing, for I have pity to see the tribulation that my mistress hath here, and all your friends, &c.

Almighty Jesu preserve and keep you. Written the Wednesday next Saint Thomas's day (*7th of July*).

Your poor servant and beadsman,

RICHARD CALLE.

Wednesday, 10th of July, 1465.
5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXXVI.—(LVI. vol. iv. p. 219.)

Margaret Paston in this letter in some measure continues the narrative of the riotous proceedings at Heylesdon and Norwich against her husband's servants and tenants by the retainers of the Duke of Suffolk; she pathetically complains of her troubles both of body and mind, and gives an alarming account of her bad state of health; appearing, however, under all her misfortunes, the careful, tender, and amiable wife.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband I recommend me to you, praying you heartily that ye will seek a mean that your servants may be in peace, for they be daily in fear of their lives; the Duke of Suffolk's men threaten daily Daubeney, Wykes, and Richard Calle, that whereseever they may get them they shall die; and affrays

[1] John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, whose favour, it appears here, must have been purchased at a high price.

have been made on Richard Calle this week, so that he was in great jeopardy at Norwich among them; and great affrays have been made upon me and my fellowship here on Monday last past, of which Richard Calle telleth me that he hath sent you word of in writing more plainly than I may do at this time, but I shall inform you more plainly hereafter.

I suppose there shall be great labour against you and your servants at the assizes and sessions here, wherefore me seemeth, saving your better advice, it were well done that ye should speak with the justices ere they come here; and if ye will that I complain to them or to any other, if Good (*God*) fortune me life and health, I will do as ye advise me to do, for in good faith I have been simply entreated among them, and what with sickness and trouble that I have had, I am brought right low and weak, but to my power I will do as I can or may in your matters.

The Duke of Suffolk[1] and both the duchesses shall come to Claxton this day, as I am informed, and this next week he shall be at Cossey; whether he will come further hitherward or not I wot not yet; it is said that he should come hither, and yet his men said here on Monday that he claimed no title to this place. They said their coming was but to take out such riotous people as was here within this place, and such as were the king's felons, and indicted and outlawed men, nevertheless they would show no warrants whereby to take none such, though there had been such here. I suppose if they might have come in peaceably they would have made another cause of their coming.

When all was done and they should depart, Harleston and other desired me that I should come and see mine old lady, and sue to my lord, and if anything were amiss it should be amended.

I said if I should sue for any remedy that I should sue further, and let the king and all the lords of this land to have knowledge what hath been done to us, if so were that the Duke would maintain that hath been done to us by his servants, if ye would give me leave.

I pray you send me word if ye will that I make any complaint to the Duke or the Duchess, for as it is told me* they know not the plainness[3] that hath been done in such things as hath been done in their names.[4]

I should write much more to you but for lack of leisure.

I commanded my master Tom this day to have come again by me from Norwich when he had spoken with Richard Calle, but he came not; I would he were quit of his indictment so that he were quit of your service, for by my truth I hold the place the more ungracious that he is in for his disposition in divers things, the which ye shall be informed of hereafter.

The Trinity have you in keeping. Written the Friday next after Saint Thomas.

By your MARGARET PASTON.

Friday, 12th of July,
1460. 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXXXVII.—(LVII. vol. iv. p. 225.)

The ease and familiar style of this letter will not be displeasing to the reader; perhaps he will smile at the particular directions concerning J. Paston's hose, and his minute description of the hosier.

To my mistress, Margaret Paston, be this delivered in haste at London.

AFTER all humble and most due recommendation, as lowly as I can, I beseech you of your blessing; please it you to weet that I have sent to my father to have an answer of

[1] John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and sister of King Edward IV. The Duchess his mother, the relict of the late Duke of Suffolk, was daughter and heir of Thomas Chaucer, Esq., and was grand-daughter to that famous poet, Geoffry Chaucer. She died in 1475.

[2] It seems from her expressions here that this riotous fellowship had proceeded to these outrageous lengths without the Duke's knowledge, and that she appears to believe the report to be true.

[3] [In original *pleynesse*,—fulness or extent.]

[4] [This is not the language or style of thought that would be used by a people accustomed to the oppression of an overpowering aristocracy. Dukes and Duchesses appear to weigh very little with Margaret Paston, while she feels conscious of her right.]

such matters as I have sent to him for in haste, of which matters the greatest of substance is for the manor of Cotton, beseeching you to remember him of the same matter that I may have an answer in the most hasty wise.

Also I pray you that mine aunt Poynings may be desired to send me an answer of such matters as she woteth of by him that shall bring me an answer of the matter of Cotton.

Also, mother, I beseech you that there may be purveyed some mean that I might have sent me home by the same messenger two pair of hose, one pair black and another pair of russet, which be ready made for me at the hosier's with the crooked back, next to the Black Friar's-gate within Ludgate; John Pampynge knoweth him well enough I suppose, and (*if*) the black hose be paid for he will send me the russet unpaid for; I beseech you that this gear be not forgotten, for I have not an whole hose for to don; I trow they shall cost both pair 8*s*.

My brother,[1] and my sister Anne,[2] and all the garrison of Heylesdon fare well, blessed be God, and recommend them to you everych (*every*) one.

I pray you visit the Rood of Northdoor and St. Saviour at Bermondsey,[3] among while ye abide (*during your abode*) in London, and let my sister Margery[4] go with you to pray to them that she may have a good husband ere she come home again: and now I pray you send us some tidings as ye were wont to command me; and the Holy Trinity have you in keeping; and my fair mistress of the Fleet. Written at Norwich, on Holy Rood day.

Your son and lowly servant,

JOHN PASTON, *the youngest*.

Norwich, Saturday,
14th of September, 1465.5 E IV.

LETTER CCXXXVIII.—(LVIII. vol. iv. p. 227.)

We who fortunately live at a time of peace and domestic tranquillity, can scarcely believe the picture of savage manners here represented: if the Duke of Suffolk were ignorant of, or did not even encourage such proceedings, it can hardly be supposed that his retainers dared to have done such mischief; they certainly must know that what they did would not meet with their lord's displeasure. Their behaviour in the church is very extraordinary, as papists almost universally pay great respect not only to their priests, but to their places of public worship, esteeming them as sacred, and on no pretence to be violated or profaned. On the back of the original letter is written in an ancient hand, "A Lrē concerning the extreme dealing of the Duke of Suff. at Haylesdon." [These cases of disputed right, and actions of ejectment, seem ever to have been conducted with singular rudeness and barbarity. The scene here depicted, and which Fenn says we can scarcely believe, is by no means of unfrequent occurrence at the present day in Ireland. The presence of the bailiffs of Eye and Stradbroke clearly shows that it was a *legal* proceeding, though Margaret Paston calls it a robbery. All excesses of the acting agents are of course uniformly repudiated by their employers.]

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me to you; please it you to weet that I was at Heylesdon upon Thursday last past, and saw the place there, and in good faith there will no creature think how foully and horribly it is arrayed[5] but if (*unless*) they saw it; there cometh much people daily to wonder thereupon, both of Norwich and of other places, and they speak shamefully thereof; the Duke had by better than a thousand pound that it had never been done, and ye have the more good will of the people that it is so foully done; and they made your tenants of Heylesdon and Drayton, with other, to help to break down the walls of the place and the lodge both, God knoweth full evil against their wills, but that they durst none other wise do for fear; I have spoken with your tenants of Heylesdon and Drayton both, and put them in comfort as well as I can: the Duke's men ransacked the church, and bare away all the good that was left there, both of ours and of the tenants, and left not so much but that they stood upon the high altar and ransacked the images, and took away such as they might find, and put away the parson out of the

[1] Sir John Paston.

[2] Anne Paston, afterwards wife of W. Yelverton.

[3] The Abbey of Saint Saviour at Bermondsey, in Surrey, was founded in 1081, 15th William the Conqueror, by Alwin Child of London; it was surrendered in 1539, 31 H. VIII. when it was pulled down, and a fair house built on the site by Sir Thomas Pope, knight.

[4] Margery Paston, she afterwards married Richard Calle.

[5] [In original *arayed*, doubtlessly for harried or herried—damaged or destroyed.]

church till they had done; and ransacked every man's house in the town five or six times; and the chief masters of robbing was the bailiff of Eye, the bailiff of Stradbrook, Thomas Slyford, and Porter; and Slyford was the chief robber of the church, and he hath most of the robbery next the bailiff of Eye; and as for lead, brass, pewter, iron, doors, gates, and other stuff of the house, men of Cussey and Cawston have it, and that they might not carry they have hewn asunder in the most despiteous wise. If it might be I would some men of worship might be sent from the king to see how it is both there and at the Lodge, ere than any snows[1] come, that they may make report of the truth, else it shall not mowe be seen so plainly as it may now; and at the reverence of God speed your matters now, for it is too horrible a cost and trouble that we have now daily, and must have till it be otherwise; and your men dare not go about to gather up your livelihood, and we keep here daily more than thirty persons for savation of us and the place, for in very truth and (*if*) the place had not been kept strong the Duke had come hither.

Arblaster thinketh verily that Hugh a Penn may do much in your matters, and he thinketh he will do for you faithfully if ye will, &c.

At the reverence of God, if any worshipful and profitable mean may be taken in your matters, forsake it not in eschewing of our trouble and great costs and charges that we have, and may grow hereafter; it is thought here that if my Lord of Norfolk would take upon him for you, and that he may have a commission for to inquire of such riots and robberies as hath been done to you and other in this country, that then all the country will await upon him and serve your intent, for the people loveth and dreadeth him more than any other lord, except the king and my Lord of Warwick, &c.

God have you in his keeping, and send us good tidings from you. Written in haste, upon the Sunday Saint Simon and Jude's even. By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Sunday,
27th of October, 1465.
5 E IV.

LETTER CCXXXIX.—(LIX. vol. iv. p. 233.)

There is no direction to this letter, but the line which precedes it is written in an ancient hand upon the back of it. The first imprisonment of John Paston was in consequence of a writ of trespass brought against him by William Jenny, Esq., serjeant-at-law, in Easter Term, 4 E. IV. 1464, when the issue being found for the plaintiff, a capias pro fine was awarded for the king; Paston absconded, and the exigent was awarded and directed to the sheriff of Suffolk, and he was called at four county courts; but before the fifth he surrendered himself and was committed to the Fleet. The second was in 1465, upon a vile suggestion that he was a bondsman of the king. He died in London the 26th of May, 1466, and was buried in the Priory of Bromholm, in Norfolk.

A letter to John Paston, Esq., from his wife, showing his imprisonment in the Fleet.

RIGHT worshipful husband I recommend me to you; please it you to weet that I received your letter that ye sent me by John Holme on Wednesday last past, and also I received another letter on Friday at night that ye sent me by Nicholas Newman's man, of the which letters I thank you, for I should else have thought that it had been worse with you than it hath been or shall be, by the grace of Almighty God, and yet I could not be merry since I had the last letter, till this day that the mayor sent to me, and sent me word that he had knowledge for very truth that ye were delivered out of the Fleet; and that Howard was committed to ward for divers great complaints that were made to the king of him; it was talked in Norwich and in divers other places in the country on Saturday last past that ye were committed to the Fleet, and in good faith, as I have heard say, the people was right sorry thereof, both of Norwich and in the country, ye are right much bound to thank God, and all those that love you, that ye have so great love of the people as ye have; ye are much beholden to the mayor,[2] and to

[1] If we may judge from the mention of snow here, the winters began earlier at this period than at the present seasons, we having very rarely now any considerable fall of snow before Christmas.

[2] Thomas Ellis was Mayor of Norwich in 1460, and again in 1465.

Gilbert,[1] and to divers others of the aldermen, for faithfully they owe you good will to their powers.

I have spoken with Sir Thomas Howes for such things as ye wrote to me for, and he promised me that he should labour it after your intent as fast as he could, and in good faith, as my brother and Playters can tell you, as by his saying to us he is and will be faithful to you; and as for William Worcester he hath been set so upon the hone,[2] what by the parson and by others, as my brother and Playters shall tell you, that they hope he will do well enough; the parson said right well and plainly to him. The parson told me that he had spoken with Sir William Chamberlayn, and with his wife, and he thinketh that they will do well enough after your intent so that they be pleasantly entreated; and the parson told me that he wist well that Sir William Chamberlayn could do more ease in such matters as ye wrote of touching my Lord of Bedford than any man could do that liveth at this day; also he told me that he felt by them that they would owe you right good will, so that ye would owe them good will; the parson hopeth verily to make you accorded when he cometh to London.

Item, my brother and Playters were with Calthorpe to inquire of the matter that ye wrote to me of, what answer he gave them they shall tell you; I sent the parson of Heylesdon[3] to Gurney[4] to speak to him of the same matter, and he saith faithfully there was no such thing desired of him, and though it had been desired, he would neither have said nor done against you; he said he had ever found you loving and faithful to him, and so he said he would be to you to his power, and desiring me that I would not think him the contrary.

As for John Gros he is at Sloley, therefore he might not be spoken with.

I pray you that ye will send me word whether ye will that I shall remove from hence, for it beginneth to wax a cold abiding here. Sir Thomas Howes and John Russ shall make an end of all things after your intent, as much as they can do therein this week, and he proposeth to come forwards to you on the Monday next after St. Leonard's day.

My brother and Playters should have been with you ere this time, but that they would abide till this day were past, because of the shire. I spoke to my brother William as ye bade me, and he told me, so God him help, that he hired two horses two days before that ye rode that he might have ridden forth with you; and because that ye spoke not to him to ride with you, he said that he wend ye would[5] have had him with you.

Thomas[6] Fastolf's mother was here on the next day after ye were ridden, to have spoken with you for her son, he (*and*) she prayeth you at the reverence of God that ye will be his good master, and to help him in his right, that he may have home his livelihood out of their hands that have it in his nonage; she saith that they would make him a year younger than he is, but she saith that he is more than twenty-one, and upon that she dare take an oath.

And the blessed Trinity have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters, and send ye victory of all your enemies. Written in haste, on Soulmas[7] day.

By yours,

MARGARET PASTON.

Soulmas day,
2d of November, 1465. 5 E. IV.

[1] John Gilbert had been mayor in 1459 and in 1464. He died in 1472.

[2] This expression is taken from setting a razor, and means that he had been talked to not only in a smooth, but likewise in a sharp and severe manner.

[3] Thomas Hert was instituted to the rectory of Heylesdon in 1448.

[4] Thomas Gurney, of Norwich, Esq., died in 1471.

[5] The word *not* seems here to have been omitted in the original letter. [In the original "he seyd yt he wond ye wold have had hym wt yow." Meaning we think—and because you did not ask him to ride with you, he had said that he thought or wished ye would have had him with you.]

[6] I am not certain in what degree of relationship this Thomas Fastolf stood to Sir John Fastolf; he was, I believe, a cousin, and a Suffolk branch of the Fastolf family, as a Thomas Fastolf resided near Ipswich in 1474. See Letter lxx. p. 54.

[7] All-souls, otherwise Soulmas day, 2d of November.

LETTER CCXL.—(LX. vol. iv. p. 241.)

John Wymondham, Esq., the writer of this letter, married Margery, the daughter of Sir Robert Clifton, knight, of Denver, in Norfolk, and widow of Sir Edward Hastings, of Elsing, knight; he therefore calls her "my lady." He died in 1475. He purchased the manor and estate at Felbrigge of the trustees of Sir Simon Felbrigge, where he had resided; but once in his absence Sir John Felbrigge made a forcible entry, and dragging out his lady by the hair of her head (who had locked herself up in a chamber to keep possession), got into possession, and retained it till Wymondham obtained the king's order to Thomas Montgomery, Esq., high-sheriff of the county, to put him again into possession. The dispute was then settled with Sir John Felbrigge, and upon Wymondham's paying to him two hundred marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) he released all claims, &c. This letter seems to have been written during the time that he was dispossessed of Felbrigge, and which must have been either before the year 1461 or 1466, those being the years in which Sir Thomas Montgomery was sheriff of Norfolk; and as J. Paston at this time seems to have been under misfortunes, it was probably near the latter year. I have therefore ventured, though doubtfully, to date the letter in 1465. This letter is curious, as it acquaints us with the ordinary and plain manners of the time.

To my worshipful cousin, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful cousin, I commend me to you; and forasmuch as there was a child dead at Astley's, and another like to be dead in the same place, what time that I rode out about my little livelihood, my lady and I both thought pity on my mistress your wife to see her abide there, and desired her to come to my poor house unto such time as ye should a be otherwise avised (*provided*), which if it please you I am right well apayed (*contented*).

Sythen (*since*) I understand by my lady that ye desire to know whether that I should abide here still or not; as to that I have none other place that I would abide at, and my lady saith how she is advised to end her life here; also she saith how ye desire to have a stable within my place; and as to that, a faith, Sir, I have none but that must needs serve for my wood; as for a chamber ye shall have one for your men all ready; and as touching a stable Sir John Sparham and I have gotten you one there (*where*) your horse stood the last time ye were in this town, and an house to lay in hay and straw, and cost you not (*nothing*) but making of a rack and a manger, and more to your ease there than here; and if ye will that it be made ready for you, send word by the bringer of this letter. And, cousin, as touching to payment, I cannot say how ye shall be pleased with my poor fare, but after that ye are come home and are acquainted therewith, we shall so accord as shall be pleasure to us both; with the grace of God, which have (*you*) in his blessed governance, and send you your mother's blessing.

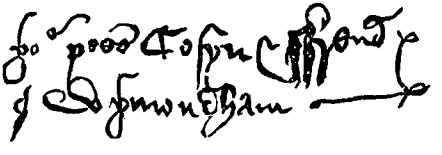
Written at Norwich, on Saint Martin's even.

Your poor cousin and friend,

J. WYMONDHAM.

And how that ever ye do, hold up your manship.

Norwich,
0th of November, 1465.
5 E. IV.



LETTER CCXLI.—(LXI. vol. iv. p. 243.)

I have given this letter to show the estimation that John Paston's assistance was held in; for the present of an hundred marks to secure his friendship was a very large sum in those days. From this letter we are likewise acquainted with the disputes subsisting between Felbrigge and Wymondham. The date cannot be clearly ascertained, but I have placed it in the January after J. Wymondham's letter, but whether rightly or not I cannot say.

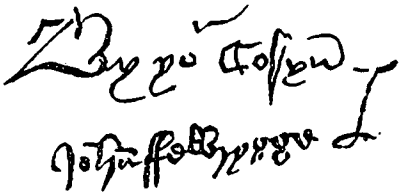
To my cousin, Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful cousin, I commend me unto you, desiring to hear of your welfare, the which the Almighty Jesu preserve to his pleasaunce, and to your own

heart's desires; furthermore, and if it please your gentleness to be my trusty friend, as my full trust is in you, as for such matters as the bringer of this letter shall inform you, and be effectually my friend and bring it about, and by my truth I shall give you an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) for your labour; for in truth I am afraid that Robert Radcliff hath deceived me, for he laboured to me daily by my lord's commandment of Warwick, and brought with him Illingworth and other of my lord's counsel, and saw my evidences; and so we stood upon appointment, and I for to have had an answer sent to Felbrigge Hall, and if ne had been (*if it had not been*) for defending of my lord's lordship, I might have had my money for my right ere I came out of London, as my man shall inform you; for in truth I must now make a shift, for Wymondham hath sold his right, and rather than it should go that way too I had lever (*rather*) my lord had it two hundred marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) within the price that I granted it last, and therefore I beseech you to labour to my lord that I may have an answer. And these many towns[1] belongeth thereto (*namely*), Felbrigge, Aylmerton, Runton, Colby, Banningham, Ingworth, Sturston, besides hamlets. No more to you at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in his keeping. Written at Felbrigge, the Monday after Saint Agnes's day.

By your cousin,

JOHN FELBRIGGE.



Felbrigge, Monday, 27th of January, 1465. 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXLII.—(LXII. vol. iv. p. 217.)

Though this letter contains nothing very curious, yet the easy style of it, and the news of the day which it announces to Sir J. Paston, make it worthy the reader's notice. His father's unkindness is likewise just hinted. This writer had an appointment in the household of Edward IV., and it may be supposed, from the concluding part of this letter, that Sir John Paston belonged to it likewise.

Unto the right worshipful master, Sir John Paston, Knight, be this letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful and my especial good master, I recommend me unto your good mastership, letting you weet that the bearer hereof told me that ye had great marvel that I send to you no word nor letter of answer of the letters that ye had sent to me to London; as for one letter ye sent to me by Richard Playters' man, and thereof I sent you an answer in a letter by a man of the Prior of Bromholm, and as for other letters there came no more to me but that one.

Item, Master Flemming looketh daily for his horse, and at every time that I meet with him he asketh of me when his horse should come, and when I heard any word from you; wherefore I pray you send me word in a letter how he shall be answered, and if the horse shall come let me know when, for and (*if*) he had not trusted thereupon he would have purveyed him in another place, &c.

Item, John Oter is not yet paid, but as I suppose it shall not be long to till he have it, for he hath spoken to my master your father again therefore; and as for Gilmyn he hath not spoken to my master as yet, &c.

Item, I trust he will be your good father, for John Say hath told him plainly of his demeaning against you, and told him that he had the less favour for your sake, &c.

Item, the Earl of Arundel's son[2] hath wedded the queen's sister.

Item, the Lord Lovel's son[3] hath wedded my Lady Fitzhugh's daughter, &c.

[1] I suppose this refers to manorial rights extending into these towns [or townships], &c.

[2] Thomas Fitz Alan, Lord Maltravers, eldest son of William Fitz Alan, Earl of Arundel, married Margaret, second daughter of Richard Widville, Earl Rivers, and sister to Elizabeth, queen of Edward IV. He succeeded his father as Earl of Arundel in 1487. 3 H. VII., and died in 1524, 16 H. VIII.

[3] Francis Lovel, son and heir to John Lord Lovel, married Anne, daughter of Henry Lord Fitz Hugh.

Item, Jenney desireth a treaty with my master, and spake to my master thereof himself in Westminster Hall.

Item, all fellows in the king's house fareth well, and would have you there. No more to you at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you (*in*) keeping. Written at London, the Monday next after Saint Valentine.

Your servant,

JOHN WYKES.

London, Monday, 17th of February, 1465. 5 E. IV.

LETTER CCXLIII.—(LXIII. vol. iv. p. 251.)

We here find that John Paston was one of the counsel to John Mowbray, the last Duke of Norfolk of that name; and that regular summonses were sent to those in this confidential station when any matters of importance arose on which their deliberations and advice became necessary; this summons appears to be on some very material business, which most probably required secresy as the purport of it was not communicated, but deferred till he should be arrived at Framlingham.

To our right trusty and entirely well-beloved servant, John Paston, the elder.

THE DUKE OF NORFOLK.

RIGHT trusty and entirely well-beloved servant, we greet you heartily well, and specially praying you that ye will be with us at Framlingham on Sunday next coming, that we may commune with you there, and have your sad (*serious*) advice in such matters as concerneth greatly to our weal, which shall be ministered (*made known*) unto you at your coming.

Praying you that ye fail not hereof, as our special trust is in you; and our Lord preserve you in his keeping.

Written at Framlingham, the 31st day of August.

NORFOLK.

Framlingham, 31st of August, before 1466. 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCXLIV.—(I. Appendix, vol. ii. p. 289.)

The tidings contained in this letter Margaret Paston thought of sufficient consequence, as her son appears to have been on his way to join these forces, to send in a letter to her husband, though she had left him only that day. This letter was written before 1466, for in that year her husband, J. Paston, died.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

PLEASETH you to weet, that John Welles and his brother told me this night that the king lay at Cambridge as yesternight, to Sandwich ward for there is great division betwixt the lords and the shipmen there that causeth him to go thither to see a remedy therefore.

I thank God that John Paston went not earlier forth, for I trust to God all shall be done ere he cometh; and it is told me that Sir John Howard is like to lose his head.

If it please you to send to the said Welles, he shall send you more tidings than I may write at this time.

God have you in his keeping.

Written in haste at Thetford, at 11 of the clock in the night the same day I departed fro you.

I thank Pampynge of his good will, and them that were cause of changing of my horse; for they did me a better turn than I weend they had done, and I shall acquit (*requite*) them another day and I may.

By your MARGARET PASTON.

Thetford, before 1466. 6 E. IV.

He very soon succeeded his father as Lord Lovel, and was afterwards created Viscount Lovel. This nobleman was lord chamberlain to Richard III., whom he attended at Bosworth Field, and was killed at the battle of Stoke in 1487, 2 H. VII. [He was the "Lovel our dog," of the rhyme,—

"The cat, the rat, and Lovel our dog,
Rule all England under the hog."

Alluding to Catesby, Ratcliffe, and Richard III.'s cognizance of a white boar.]

LETTER CCXLV.—(LXIV. vol. iv. p. 253.)

This and the following letter were written by Roger Taverham, a descendant of a family of that name, long before this time seated at Taverham in Norfolk. He was now resident at Salisbury, and was going on a pilgrimage to Rome and other holy places, with an intention never to return to England. The style and spelling of the letters come near to those of modern times. The methods then in use by which property was conveyed are here fully related, and are matters worthy of attention of the lawyer and antiquary, and on that account I have thought the contents of these letters worth preserving. The letters seem written from the heart, and express the gratitude of one who in his youth had received countenance and protection from the person to whom he now wishes to return the obligations he thought due to him. It does not appear with what lord he now dwelt at Salisbury.

To my reverend and most-betrusted master, John Paston, Esq., dwelling in the Inner Temple, be this delivered.

RIGHT reverend and most betrusted master, I recommend me in the most lowly wise unto your good and proved mastership, and desiring many days to hear of your welfare, which I beseech God increase unto his pleasaunce and unto the prosperity and welfare of your person and of all yours. And I beseech you of the good continuance of your mastership at divers times before this writing showed unto me; and, Sir, there is none man alive that I trust more to than I do unto you, and I am your beadsman, and so shall remain by the grace of God all the days of mine life; and, Sir, I suppose I shall never see you no more, nor none of mine friends, which is to me the greatest lamentation that might come unto mine heart, for, Sir, by the grace of God I shall go to Rome, and into other holy places, to spend mine days of this present life in the service of God; for I had lever[1] (*rather*) live in great tribulation in the service of God in this present life, than for to follow the wretchedness of this world.

And, Sir, of one thing I beseech specially your good mastership, that ye will show your good mastership unto my father in time of his need, and that ye will recommend me in the most lowly wise with all reverence unto his good fatherhood, beseeching him that he will give me every day, during the days of his life, his paternal blessing; and I have marvel san (*since*) that I have written so many letters unto him before this time that I had never none letter again, which is to me the greatest lamentation that ever came to my heart; and now knowing that I shall never see him more, nor you, nor none other of mine friends, marvel ye not that sorrow is imprended (*impressed*) in mine heart.

But, reverend master, mine singular trust remaineth now in your person, for, Sir, and (*if*) it please you, I must needs write unto your good mastership, in the which my most trust remaineth; for, Sir, and (*if*) it please you, as for mine inheritance and other things which should come to me after the death of my father, whose life God preserve to his long pleasaunce! knowing that I shall never come there, I had lever that by your good advice that ye would take it unto you, for I had lever that ye had it rather than any person in the world during my life, with all the profits thereof, and if that ye will make as good evidences (*title*) for you in that part as ye can, and I shall seal them; and as to you seemeth best, and in the most secret wise, rule you in this matter.

And, Sir, I beseech you to recommend me in the most lowly wise to mine reverend master William Lumnor, saying him (*telling him*) that I am and shall be his perpetual beadsman, and as ye think best ye may tell him of all these matters; and, Sir, I beseech you to recommend me with all reverence unto my mistress your wife, and to all other masters and friends there; and for that ye will thank the bringer of this letter which hath been in my great tribulation my good friend; and, Sir, when ye speak with my father recommend me unto him with all reverence, and say unto him I shall send him a letter in all haste possible.

And, Sir, as for this matter demean you as ye will, and I shall do your pleasaunce as

[1] [This word is the German *lieber*—rather, and is still used, though probably become a vulgarism, in the phrase "I had as *lief*."]

much as in me is; and, reverend master, remit me some letter by the bringer hereof of all these matters, for he dwelleth with my lord, and he is right much betrusted, for I know well he will give attendance unto you for to have some letter from you; for, Sir, it shall not be long ere that I go to Rome by the grace of God; and as soon as I have a letter from you at this time I shall send you another again.

No more at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in his blessed keeping. Written at Sarum, the Monday after Midsummer day. And let these matters be kept secret by your best advice.

By your poor Servant,

ROGER TAVERHAM.

Salisbury, Monday, June, before 1466. 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCXLVI.—(LXV. vol. iv. p. 259.)

[This letter is from the same person as the last, and is remarkable as showing that the heir of a considerable landed estate could live in England, and write many letters to his father, without receiving intelligence that he had been dead "long tyme passed."]

To my right worshipful master, John Paston, Esq., be this letter delivered.

RIGHT worshipful master, I recommend me unto your mastership, and I thank your mastership that it pleased your mastership to send me word again of my letter that I sent you by the bringer hereof. Sir, as I am informed ye sent me word how that my father was dead long time passed, and also ye desired to know my title of right; Sir, I am very heir by the decease of my father to a place called Keswick, in Taverham, with all the appurtenances, and that cometh by inheritance and descent to me, for I am the elder and heir; and though my Lord Cromwell[1] hath taken Thomas Taverham, my younger brother, as ward for the same inheritance, that maketh no matter to me, insomuch (*as*) I am elder brother; wherefore I beseech you to send me a letter of attorney, made to you in my name, in the strongest wise that ye can, for to enter into the same livelihood, and I shall asseal that, and then I shall do my service and fealty to the said Lord Cromwell in all things as by the tenure of the same livelihood of old time ought to be done; and herein I know well the king shall cause my Lord Cromwell to do me both law and right; and also my Lord Chancellor, with other lords divers shall do the same; and, Sir, I beseech your mastership to do and to take possession in the said place with the appurtenances in short time, for losing[2] of the rent this year passed.

And, Sir, as for the place of Attlebridge that my mother-in-law now dwelleth in, Sir, your mastership shall right not attempt there now in, for my Lord of Warwick[3] hath seen how the same place was given me by testament, by Sir Roger Dalling, after the decease of my father, which is ready to be showed; and thereupon my Lord of Warwick hath commanded certain gentlemen to enter in the same place, and your mastership had been moved therein ere this, but for cause that ye love well Lumnor,[4] and that my mother-in-law is his sister; but I know well it will cost three hundred pounds but that she shall be dispossessed of that place in short time; and, master, how ye will be ruled in the said place of Keswick I beseech you to send me word, as my singular trust is in you, for and (*if*) ye would not take possession in the said place, my Lord Wenlock[5] would have that full fain, for all the country knoweth that while I live I am heir and none other, and therefore I beseech you in all haste send me

[1] Humphry Bourchier Lord Cromwell, so created in 1461.

[2] [In order not to lose.]

[3] Richard Nevile, Earl of Warwick.

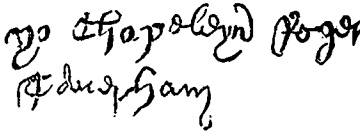
[4] William Lumnor, of Mannington, in Norfolk.

[5] John Wenlock was created Baron Wenlock in 1461, by Edward IV., but he afterwards left the York party, and joined that of Lancaster; he was cleft down with a battle-axe by the Duke of Somerset, for not coming up in time at the battle of Tewkesbury, in 1471, whereby that battle was lost.

word by the bringer hereof in haste, quia mora trahit periculum, and, Sir, I would come (*and*) speak with you; I am sick and may not go; but tell the bringer hereof all your intent, for my life during I had lever (*rather*) that ye had that place for one penny than another man though he would give me much money, for your mastership showed to me in my young age, and God keep you, &c.

Your chaplain, ROGER TAVERHAM.

July, before 1466.
6 E. IV.



LETTER CCXLVII.—(LXVI. vol. iv. p. 263.)

This appears not to have been the first letter which J. Paston had received relative to the behaviour of his cousin Mary. It seems by it that she had happened of an accident too common in our age, but which, in the times here treated of, was looked upon as disgraceful in a high degree, not only to the person but likewise to her family and friends. I wish the shame of it was more attended to now than it is, as that would perhaps prevent the ruin of many young people of both sexes; and in most cases of this kind the female, for the first offence, is generally entitled to our pity, however abandoned she may become afterwards. I am sorry, as an acting magistrate, to say that licentiousness in this respect is an increasing evil, affecting not only the morals of the lower classes in an amazing degree, but adding considerably to the already enormous burden of the poor rates. [It is not easy to say what Sir John here desires. He says he wishes "the shame of it was more attended to than it now is," but adds, "the female, for the first offence, is generally entitled to our pity." We doubt the correctness of his experience as an "acting magistrate," as to licentiousness being an increasing evil; but the recent alteration in the poor laws has no doubt afforded a great correction of the evil, whatever it was. We believe also that the "disgrace" in a respectable family is felt as acutely now, if not more acutely, than ever; the result of an increased delicacy of feeling arising from a more extended and better education.]

Be this delivered to Master John Paston.

I RECOMMEND me unto you as unknown; and as for the writing I send unto you, the cause why it was not endorsed was for the bearer thereof knew you well enough, and as for your cousin Mary she is no longer with us, as upon Saint Matthew's even she departed from me and went to Audrey Croxton; and she told me that ye would pay for her board there; but one thing I let you know, she hath demeaned her full simply, both for your worship and also for her own; there is but few within our place but they know how it is with her, and all by her own business of her tongue. And (*if*) I had known as much at the beginning as I have done since, I would not have dealt in the matter not for forty pounds, for I wis she is nothing so sad [*serious*] as I would she were. No more to you at this time, but the Holy Ghost have you in his keeping and send you your heart's ease; I pray you heartily I may speak with you. B. D. M. S.

No exact date of the year can be affixed to this letter, which appears to have been written in September or October, before 1466. 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCXLVIII.—(LXVII. vol. iv. p. 265.)

I have given this letter to show the very great repute in which the liquor here mentioned was held at this time: Sir John Paston's observations to prove it genuine manifest the esteem in which it stood as a cordial. Geane, Gin, or Geneva (if that be the thing here meant), is a compound water, procured from the berries of the juniper, distilled with brandy or malt spirits, and was for many years drank in improper quantities by the lower order of people in this kingdom, and attended with very pernicious effects; as a medicine it has now its uses. In a letter which I have examined since I copied the above, I find the following order; —"I prey yow send me by the next man that comyth fro London ij pottys of tryacle of Ienue, they shall

cost xvjd." I believe I am mistaken, therefore, in calling the medicine mentioned in this letter Gin or Genova; it seems from this last extract to be treacle of Genoa, a city in Italy, from whence various drugs and medicines are imported. This letter has no date, and the subscribing signature is torn off; it was, however, written by Sir John Paston to his mother in the reign of Edward IV. [The last explanation seems the true one; they would hardly send Geneva in treacle pots, nor in so very small a quantity, nor through an apothecary. It was more probably a medicated treacle.]

To Mistress Margaret Paston, be this delivered.

PLEASE it you to weet that I send you by Barker, the bearer hereof, three treacle pots of Geane as my apothecary sweareth unto me, and moreover that they were never undone since they came from Geane, whereof ye shall take as many as pleaseth you, nevertheless my brother John sent to me for two, therefore I must beseech you that he may have at the least one; there is one pot that is marked under the bottom two times, with these letters M. P., which pot I have best trust unto, and next him to the wryghe (*q. twisted*) pot, and I mistrust most the pot that hath a krott (*q. a crack, or piece chipt off*) above on the top, lest that he hath been undone; and also the other two pots be printed with the merchant's mark two times on the covering, and that other pot is but once marked but with one print; notwithstanding I had like oath and promise for one as well as for all.

JOHN PASTON.

Between 1460 and 1470.
1 and 10 E. IV.

END OF VOL. I.

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PASTON LETTERS.

EDWARD IV.—1460 TO 1483.

LETTER CCXLIX.—(LXVIII. vol. iv. p. 267.)

I have given this letter to show the great desire which the relations and other connexions of a deceased man of property always expressed to get possession of his estates, in prejudice to the minor and widow, and of the steps they took to obtain it. This letter likewise makes us acquainted with the process the lady wished to pursue, through the means of Sir John Paston, to regain her property. Elizabeth Poynings, the writer of this letter, and the daughter of John Paston, married Robert Poynings, a younger son of Robert Lord Poynings, by whom she had her son Edward here mentioned. He was Lord Deputy of Ireland, and during his administration in 1494, 10 H. VII., those statutes called Poynings' Laws were passed, by which the power of the Irish parliament was restrained, and their Acts subjected to the revisal of the Privy Council of England. He died of a pestilential fever in 1522, 14 H. VIII., aged about sixty-two years. These, with other Acts enacting the dependency of Ireland on this kingdom, were repealed in 1785, 25 Geo. III. [We need hardly point out Fenn's magical deduction of "always" drawn from this single letter. We believe there is no want of alacrity shown even now by the relations and connexions of a deceased man of property in taking advantage of any point of law in their favour.]

To the worshipful Sir John Paston, Knight, be this delivered in haste.

WORSHIPFUL and with all mine heart entirely well-beloved nephew, I recommend me to you, desiring to hear of your prosperity and welfare, which I pray Almighty God maintain and increase to his pleasure and your heart's desire, thanking God of your amending and health. Furthermore certifying you that Sir Robert Fynes[1] hath done great hurt in the livelihood which pertained to my husband and me in the shire of Kent, wherein William Keene and other persons are enfeoffed, and greatly troubleth it, and receiveth the issues and profits of great part of them, and as of my said husband's livelihood as well in the same shire as in other shires.

Beside mine jointure my said husband, when he departed towards the field of St. Alban's, made and ordained his will that I should have the rule of all his livelihood, and of Edward his son and mine, and to take the issues and profits of the said livelihood to the finding of his and mine said son, to pay his debts, and to keep the right and title of the same livelihood, which I might not accordingly occupy for Sir Edward Poynings mine said husband's brother; and so, since my said husband's departing, I assigned that the said Sir Edward for certain years should have and take the revenues of the manors of Westwood, Eastwell, Loneland, Horsemonden, Totingdon, Eccles, Standon, and Combesden, parcel of the said livelihood, which are clearly yearly worth 76*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*, to the intent that the said Sir Edward should pay mine husband's debts, for he would not suffer me to be in rest without that he might have a rule in the livelihood; and after the said assignment made, the said Robert Fynes, contrary to truth, and without cause of right, interrupted me and the said Sir Edward, as well of and in the said manors as of other manors underwritten, whereupon the same Sir Edward sued unto the king's highness, and had the king's honourable letters under his signet directed to the said Sir Robert Fynes, the tenour whereof I send unto you herein enclosed; and as for residue of the livelihood of mine said husband's and mine within the same shire of Kent, wherein the said William Keene and other are enfeoffed, that is to say, the manors of Tyrlingham, Wolverton, Halton, Newington, Bartram,

[1] This was a knightly family, of great worth and worship, and a branch of it became Barons Dacre of Gillesland.

Rokesley and Northcray, with the appurtenances, I of them, by mine said husband's will, should have residue, and take the issues and profits of them, contrary to right and conscience taking away my right, and breaking my said husband's will, the said Robert Fynes hath done great waste and hurt there, and long time hath taken up the revenues and profits of the same, where thorough I have not my right, and the said will may not be performed.

Wherefore I heartily pray you that ye will labour unto the king's highness that it liketh him (*to*) address his honourable letters to be directed to the said Robert Fynes, discharging him utterly of the mesurance, occupation, and receipt of the revenues of the said manors of Tyrlingham and other, according to the tenour of the letters laboured by Sir Edward, for the manors assigned to him from the king's highness directed to the same Robert Fynes, or straiter if it may be, and that I and mine assigns may peaceably re-enjoy them; and if any person would attempt to do the contrary, that a commandment, if it please the king's highness, by him might be given to my Lord Chancellor to seal writings sufficient with his great seal in aiding and assisting me and mine assigns in the same.

And as for the manors of Easthall, Faulkham, Asslie, and Chelsfield, with the appurtenances in the said shire of Kent, whereof my husband at his departure was seised, and my son sithen (*since*), unto the time that the Earl of Kent,[1] without any inquisition or title of right for the king, by colour of the king's letters patent, entered into them, and him thereof put out, and now my Lord of Essex[2] occupieth them in like manner and form; if any remedy therein will be had I pray you attempt it.

Also, furthermore I heartily pray you that if any general pardon be granted, that I may have one for John Dane, my servant, whom the said Robert Fynes of great malice hath indicted of felony, and that ye secretly labour this, and send me an answer in writing in as goodly haste as ye may; as soon as it may please you to send me parcels of costs and expenses ye bear and pay for the said causes, I will truly content you it of the same, and over that reward you to your pleasure; by the grace of Jesu, who have you in his blessed keeping. Written in Southwark, the 15th day of December,

By your aunt,

ELIZABETH POYNINGS.

Southwark, 15th December,
between 1465 and 1471.
5 and 11 E. IV.

LETTER CCL.—(XX. vol. i. p. 289.)

This letter, though without any name, was written by Sir John Paston to his brother John Paston, and the mention of oil for sallads shows us that at this time vegetables for the table were still cultivated here; for the common opinion has been that most of our fruits and garden productions were so entirely neglected during these civil wars, as to have been almost totally destroyed. [And oil was used in dressing sallads as now.]

To Master John Paston, or to my mistress his mother, be this letter delivered in haste.

BROTHER, I commend me to you (*then follows an order for making out an account, and receiving some rents, &c.*)

By Juddy I sent you a letter by Corby within four days before this; and therewith two pots of oil for sallads, which oil was good as might be when I delivered it, and shall be good at the receiving, if it be not mishandled nor miscarried.

Item, as for tidings, the Earl of Northumberland[3] is home into the north, and my

[1] Edmund Grey, Lord Grey of Ruthin, and Baron Hastings, was created Earl of Kent in 1465; he died in 1489.

[2] Henry Viscount Bourchier, &c., uncle to King Edward IV., was created Earl of Essex in 1461; he was succeeded by his son Henry in 1483.

[3] John Nevile was created Earl of Northumberland in 1463, but resigned this title in 1469 to the family of Percy, the ancient possessors of it.

Lord of Gloucester[1] shall after as to-morrow, men say. Also this day Robert of Ratclyff wedded the Lady Dymock at my place in Fleet-street, and my lady and yours, Dame Elizabeth Bourchier,[2] is wedded to the Lord Howard's son and heir. Also Sir Thomas Walgrave is dead of the sickness that reigneth on Tuesday, now (*q. no*) cheer for you. Also my Lord Archbishop[3] was brought to the Tower on Saturday at night; and on Monday, at midnight, he was conveyed to a ship, and so into the sea, and as yet I cannot understand whither he is sent nor what is fallen (*become*) of him; men say that he hath offended; but, as John Forter saith, some men say nay; but all his meny [*houschold*] are disparbled (*dispersed*), every man his way; and some that are great clerks and famous doctors of his go now again to Cambridge to school.

As for any other tidings I hear none. The Countess of Oxford[4] is still in St. Martin's; I hear no word of her.

The queen had child, a daughter,[5] but late at Windsor, thereof I trow ye had word. And as for me, I am in like case as I was; and as for my Lord Chamberlain[6] he is not yet come to town, when he cometh then shall I weet what to do. Sir John of Parr is your friend and mine, and I gave him a fair arming sword within this three days. I heard somewhat by him of a back friend of yours; ye shall know more hereafter.

Written the last day of April.

30th of April,
1466. 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCLI.—(LXIX. vol. iv. p. 273.)

This letter is endorsed in an ancient hand, as follows, "A very good Lrē moving Sir J. P. to be carefull for his wrytings and evidence and how much his ffather did esteme of them." The disputes concerning Sir John Fastolf's will being undetermined at John Paston's death, his widow was fearful lest, by taking the management of his affairs, she should bring both herself and her son into trouble; she therefore cautions him against interfering. Her admonitions to Sir John respecting his attention to his writings and evidences show us the value our ancestors set upon their title-deeds, &c. The whole letter is replete with good advice to a young man just become his own master by the death of his father, and convinces us that the writer knew mankind, and wished her son to profit by her experience. The date may be later than I have placed it, but the reasons for giving the letter remain the same.

To my right worshipful master, Sir John Paston, Knight, be this letter delivered in haste.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine; desiring you to send me word how that ye speed in your matters, for I think right long till I hear tidings from you; and in alwyse (*by all means*) I advise you for to beware that ye keep wisely your writings that be of charge, that it (*they*) come not in their hands that may hurt you hereafter; your father, whom God assoil in his trouble's season! set more by his writings and evidence than he did by any of his moveable goods: remember, that if they were had from you, ye could never get no more such as they be for your part, &c.

Item, I would ye should take heed that if any process come out against me, or against any of those that were indicted afore the co-

---

[1] Richard Plantagenet, afterwards King Richard III.

[2] Thomas Howard, son of John Lord Howard, was created Earl of Surrey by Richard III., and Duke of Norfolk by Henry VIII. He married Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Sir Frederick Tilney, Kt., and widow of Humphrey Bourchier, Lord Berners; she died about 1507. Their son Thomas, afterwards Duke of Norfolk, was born about 1470.

[3] I suppose this means George Nevile, Archbishop of York, and brother to Richard Nevile, Earl of Warwick, who at this time was greatly discontented with the proceedings of the king, and perhaps had drawn his brother the Archbishop into the commission of some act disagreeable to Edward.

[4] Margaret, wife of John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, was daughter of Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury, and sister of Richard Earl of Warwick. This lady suffered much, both from poverty and distress, during the imprisonment and exile of her husband.

[5] Elizabeth, afterwards Queen Consort of Henry VII.; she was born in February, 1465.

[6] William Lord Hastings.

roner, that I might have knowledge thereof, and to purvey a remedy therefore.

Item, as for your father's will, I would ye should take right good counsel therein, as I am informed it may be proved though no man take no charge this twelvemonth; ye may have a letter of administration to such as ye will, and administer the goods, and take no charge; I advise you that ye in no wise take no charge thereof till ye know more than ye do yet, for ye may verily know by that your uncle William said to you and to me, that they will lay the charge upon you and me for more things than is expressed in your father's will, the which should be too great for you or me to bear, but as for me I will not be too hasty to take it upon me I assure you; and at the reverence of God speed your matters so this term that we may be in rest hereafter, and let not for no labour for the season, and remember the great cost and charge that we have had hithertoward, and think verily it may not long endure. Ye know what ye left when ye were last at home, and weet it verily there is no more in this country to bear out no charge with. I advise you to inquire wisely if ye can get any more there as (*where*) ye be, for else by my faith I fear else it will not be well with us; and send me word in haste how ye do, and whether ye have your last deeds that ye failed [*wanted*], for plainly they are not in this country. It is told me in counsel that Richard Calle hath nigher conquered your uncle William with fair promise touching his livelihood and other things, the which should prevail him greatly as he saith; beware of him and of his fellow by mine advice. God send you good speed in all your matters. Written at Caister, the morrow next after Simon and Jude, whereas I would not be at this time but for your sake, so might I choose.

By your mother,

MARGARET PASTON.

Caister, Wednesday,
29th of October, 1466. 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCLII.—(LXX. vol. iv. p. 277.)

On the back of this letter in an ancient hand is written, "Testes idonei ad negandū veritatem, ut patet infra." The disposal of Sir John Fastolf's large property occasioned many long and expensive contests, some claiming by heirship, some by gift, and others by different titles under his will. The present dispute seems to have been relative to the estate intended for the foundation of his college at Caister. The account of the characters of those who were going to London to be examined on this occasion is curious. This letter has neither subscription nor date, but by the contents it appears to have been written to Sir John Paston by his brother, and not till after the death of their father; it could not be written therefore before 1466.

John Paston to Sir John Paston, Knight.

SIR, it is so that this Saturday John Russe sent me word by Robert Butler that William Yelverton hath been this three days in Yarmouth for to get new witnesses up to London, and it is thought by the said John Russe and Robert Butler, their witnessing is for to prove that it was Sir John Fastolf's will that there should be amortised 300 marks (200*l.*) by year to the college; and also that such estate as my father took here at Caister, at Lammas next before that Sir John Fastolf died, was delivered to my father to the intent for to perform the said will.

Bartholomew Ellis, John Appleby and John Clerk are the witnesses: and as for Bartholomew Ellis he is outlawed; and also men say in Yarmouth that he is bawd betwixt a clerk of Yarmouth and his own wife. And as for John Appleby he is half frentyk (*crazy*) and so taken in the town, notwithstanding he is an attorney, as Bartholomew Ellis is, in the bailiff's court of Yarmouth; and as for John Clerk of Gorleston, he is outlawed at Sir John Fastolf's suit, and at divers other men's, notwithstanding he is thorough with Sir Thomas for Sir John Fastolf, for this cause that the said clerk was one of Sir Thomas Howys's last witnesses before this. I trow John Loer shall be another witness. As for Bartholomew Ellis and John Appleby, they lie this night at Blighborough onward on their way to London ward; make good watch on them.

I pray you send us some good tidings.

Written the Saturday late at night next after Candlemas-day. I pray you remember John Grey and John Burgess; we have home the most part of your barley save from Winterton, and that I trust to have the next week, or else we will strait (*q. distrain*) for it by the grace of God, whom I beseech make you good.

I think their coming up is for to disprove your witnesses that ye had into the Chancery.

JOHN PASTON.

February, after 1466.
6 E. IV.

LETTER CCLIII.—(LXXI. vol. iv. p. 281.)

The various matter treated of in this letter gives it a claim to be inserted in this collection, especially as it discovers the characters and views of many persons mentioned in this work. It has no date, nor can we clearly ascertain how long after 1466 it must have been written; 'tis probably not a great while. William Wainfleet, the founder of Magdalen College in Oxford, was at this time Bishop of Winchester, his partiality for this university is therefore easily to be accounted for.

To my right worshipful mistress, Margaret Paston, widow.

RIGHT worshipful mistress, after due recommendation, please your good mistress-ship to weet that I communed late with your entirely well-beloved son, Sir John Paston, if the foundation of my master Fastolf's college might be at Cambridge in case it shall not be at Caister, neither at St. Benet's, because that university lieth near the country of Norfolk and Suffolk; for albeit [*although*][1] my Lord of Winchester is disposed to found a college in Oxford for my said master to be prayed for, yet with much less cost he might make some other memorial also in Cambridge, and (*if*) it were of two clerks and three or four scholars, founded at least with the value of good benefices and rich parsonages that might be purchased the advowsons with much less goods than lordships or manors may; and I found your son well disposed to move and excite my said lord. Also now the Christmas week next before the feast at London, my Lord Winchester called me to him in presence of Sir John, and desired him effectually to be my good willer; and master would have no words rehearsed on my behalf, and he said, full well, would Jesu, mistress, that my good master that was some time your husband in my said master Fastolf's life days, as he showed to me there could have found in his heart to have trusted and loved me as my master Fastolf did, and that he would not have given credence to the maliciously contrived tales that Friar Brackley, W. Barker and others imagined untruly, saving your reverence, of me. And now ye may openly understand the sooth, and your son Sir John also; and yet for all that, I put never my master Fastolf's livelihood in trouble, for all the unkindness and covetousness that was showed me, as I have declared to the bearer hereof, that I know ye trust well, to whom in this ye may give credence at this time.

God amend J. Russe, I would he had been at Ireland for one day's sake.

Your

WILLIAM WORCESTER.

And I thank you heartily for my poor woman, she should come to you at your commandment late or rathe (*early*), but for jealousy and misdeeming of people that have me in great await (*that mean to do me mischief*); and ye know well, mistress, better is a friend unknown than known; the world is so misdeeming and ready to make division and debate; that cometh of an envious disposition. And I am right glad that Caister is and shall be at your commandment, and yours in especial, a rich jewel it is at need for all the country in time of war; and my master Fastolf would rather he had never builded it than it should be in the governance of any sovereign that will oppress the country. And I find the religious of St. Benet's full unkindly took away a chamber the elder abbot had put me

[1] [In the original *albe it*. Fenn translates "for all be it, my Lord of Winchester," &c.]

in possession for my solace, when I might come thither and desport me, and took that chamber to master John Smyth, that Sir Thomas Howys said to me was none wholesome counseller in the reformation of the last testament made, but two executors to have the rule alone; I would he had never meddled of it, that counsel made much trouble; I pray you keep this letter close to yourself, as I trust you and Sir James, and also in R. Toly, that I understand him close and just.

I had no time to speak within now late, when I was but one day at Norwich. W. Barker slandered me in certain matters of good to the sum of 500 marks (333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) that Reynold Harneys should keep and take one half; would Jesus Barker had said true, it might have done me much good; and, mistress, as I dare desire you, I pray you recommend me to my best mistress your mother Agnes, for she favoured me and did me great charity, to be the better disposed to her son master John. And by my soul it made me the heartier to save the livelihood from trouble or from claims, as I report me to all the world, I put never manor nor livelihood of my master Fastolf's in trouble, nor entitled no creature to no place, and ye may speak to her hereof when ye be alone.

After 1466. 6 E. IV.

LETTER CCLIV.—(LXXII. vol. iv. p. 287.)

In the proposals of marriage here preserved of this distant age, we find the care and attention paid by our ancestors to the endowment of the lady; most proposals being accompanied with terms for that purpose. The Strangers or L'Estranges here mentioned, were of the ancient and knightly family of L'Estrange of Hunstanton, in Norfolk.

To my right worshipful and good master, Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, after due recommendation, please it you to understand the cause of my writing is for a marriage for my mistress Margery your sister; for my nephew John Straunge would make her sure of forty pounds jointure, and two hundred marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) by year of inheritance; and if ye and your friends will agree hereto, I trust to God it shall take a conclusion to the pleasure of God and worship to both parties.

Moreover, and it pleaseth you to weet, I am sore troubled with Bedston, as well by the way of attachments out of the Chancery as otherwise; I must beseech you of your good mastership and help in secret manner, as Sir Thomas Lynes the bringer of this shall inform you. I shall be at London in the beginning of this term by the grace of God, which preserve you. Written at Norwich, in haste, the Monday after Twelfth-day.

By your

J. STRANGE.

Norwich, January, between 1466 and 1469. 6 and 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLV.—(XXI. vol. i. p. 293.)

This letter of Sir John Paston, to his mother, appears to have been written between the years 1466 and 1469, after King Edward's marriage, and the consequent displeasure of the Earl of Warwick; but as it has no date the precise time cannot be ascertained, nor have our histories mentioned any public entry of the king into London, on his coming from York, about this period. Here is no mention of any of the queen's relations as attendant on the king, who is said to speak of the Duke of Clarence, the Earls of Warwick and Oxford, and the Archbishop of York as his best friends, though those of his household knew he regarded them in a very different light.

To Mistress Margaret Paston be this delivered.

RIGHT worshipful mother, I commend me to you and beseech you of your blessing and God's; thank you for your tenderness and help both to me, my brother, and servants. (*Then*

follows an account of money, debts, &c., a dispute with his uncle William, and a desire to defer his sister Margery's marriage with Richard Calle till Christmas, &c.)

The king is come to London, and there came with him, and rode again (*and rode to meet*) him the Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of Suffolk,[1] the Earl of Arundel,[2] the Earl of Northumberland,[3] the Earl of Essex;[4] the Lords Harry and John of Buckingham,[5] the Lord Dacre,[6] the Lord Chamberlain,[7] the Lord Montjoy[8] and many other knights and esquires; the mayor of London, twenty-two aldermen in scarlet, and of the craftsmen of the town to the number of two hundred all in blue.

The king came thorough Cheap, though it were out of his way, because (*if he had not*) he would not be seen; and he was accompanied in all people with one thousand horse, some harnessed and some not.

My Lord Archbishop[9] came with him from York, and is at the Moor,[10] and my Lord of Oxford[11] rode to have met the king, and he is with my Lord Archbishop at the Moor; and came not to town with the king. Some say that they were yesterday three miles to the king wards from the Moor; and that the king sent them a messenger that they should come when that he sent for them. I wot (*know*) not what to suppose therein.

The king himself hath good language of the Lords of Clarence, of Warwick, and of my Lords of York and of Oxford, saying, they be his best friends; but his household men have other language, so what shall hastily fall I cannot say. My Lord of Norfolk[12] shall be here this night. I shall send you more when I know more.

Item, if Ebesham[13] come not home with my uncle William, that then ye send me the two French books, that he should have written, that he may write them here.

JOHN PASTON, *Knight.*

The seal has here a circle of fleur de lys, they usually adopted but one.

LETTER CCLVI.—(LXXIII. vol. iv. p. 289.)

The date of this letter from Margaret Paston does not appear, but it seems to have been written within a few years after her husband's death, though as the age of her daughter Anne at her father's decease is not known we cannot exactly ascertain it. Anne was now grown tall, and becoming a woman. The endeavouring to educate young women in the houses of their superiors or of their friends and relations at a distance from home has been before noticed (see Letter cvii. v. i. p. 82.), and was certainly a very proper method of having them instructed [There appears, notwithstanding, a great want of affection between mother and daughters; a consequence, we think, of such estrangement.]

To John Paston, the younger, be this delivered in haste.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine; letting you weet that since ye departed my cousin Calthorpe sent me a letter complaining in his writing that forasmuch as he cannot be paid of his tenants as he hath been before this time, he proposeth

[1] John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, he married Elizabeth, sister of Edward IV.

[2] William Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, married Joan, daughter of Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury.

[3] John Neville, Earl of Northumberland, from 1463 to 1469.

[4] Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex, he married Cecily, aunt to Edward IV.

[5] These two lords were of the family of Stafford, Duke of Buckingham.

[6] Richard Fynes, Lord Dacre.

[7] William Lord Hastings.

[8] Walter Blount, created Lord Montjoy in 1465.

[9] George Nevile, Archbishop of York.

[10] The Moor, a seat of the Archbishop's in Hertfordshire.

[11] John de Vere, Earl of Oxford.

[12] John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.

[13] Ebesham was a transcriber of books, an employment much patronised before the invention of printing.

to lessen his household, and to live the straitlier, wherefore he desireth me to purvey for your sister Anne; he saith she waxeth high (*grows tall*), and it were time to purvey her a marriage; I marvel what causeth him to write so now, either she hath displeased him, or else he hath taken her with default; therefore I pray you commune with my cousin Clere at London, and weet how he is disposed to her ward, and send me word, for I shall be fain to send for her, and with me she shall but lose her time, and without she will be the better occupied she shall often times move me and put me in great inquietness; remember what labour I had with your sister, therefore do your part to help her forth, that may be to your worship and mine.

Item, remember the bill that I spake to you of to get of your brother of such money as he hath received of me since your father's decease; see your uncle Maultby if ye may, and send me some tidings as soon as ye may; God keep you. Written the Friday next before Saint Thomas of Canterbury, in haste (*29th of December*).

By your mother,

MARGARET PASTON.

Friday, December.
between 1466 and 1470. 6 and 10 E. IV.

LETTER CCLVII.—(LXXIV. vol. iv. p. 291.)

I have printed this letter as showing not only the friendly and just disposition of the writer, evident from the advice which he gives Sir John Paston, but to show the duty and respect of children then continued annually to the memory of their deceased parents. The year-day or anniversary of any person's death was called the Obit; and to observe such day with prayers and alms, or other commemoration, was called keeping the Obit. We find that Hugh Fenne strictly fulfilled this observance of filial duty to his deceased mother. The device on his seal is a flourishing tree, having the initial letters of his names, one on each side; it alluded perhaps to his own happy and flourishing situation in respect to his fortune, family, and friends. [The advice seems very strongly to tend to his own interest, or his client's.]

To the right worshipful Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you; like you (*to*) weet a distress was taken in Caister, by Thomas Peacock, I trow your servant, a busy man called, of a full true soul, John Hadynet of Heringsby, a poor man, his plough hath lain ever since he saith; I understand it is for Catts' land. I sent my clerk to my mistress your mother, and the said John with him therefore; and my mistress would him come again another day, for Peacock was not then at home; so he did, and cannot have it as he saith, but that ye would I should speak with you at Caister thereof and of other matters he told me this day; and because of my mother's year-day holden this day, God have her soul, and tomorrow shall be a good day, I would by God's grace dispose me to his mercy against Thursday, as I have used, therefore I pray you pardon my coming; in the week after Easter, I intend to see you and my said mistress certainly; it is long since I saw her meseemeth, and if ye be not then at Caister I pray you send me word that I may come sooner to you to commune with you in this matter, and in all other that ye will, and so depart to London from thence, and therefore I will abide with you a good while.

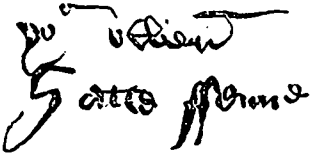
Sir, as to Catts, ye be remembered what I said to you at London at two times, I am the same man; I have since I came gotten the evidences into my hands, and I am ready to show them what learned man here that ye will assign, the matter is clear to my thinking. Titteshale that sold it to Sir John Fastolf might as well have sold him your land or mine; and if the sale be lawful, I shall leave my hands at the first, as I said at London, the distress to be kept for that I wiss it need not, and it was unlawfully taken; like it you to do deliver the poor man his goods again, I am ready to answer you for old and new as right will; I shall break no day to be assigned for to leave all other things.

By the Blessed Lady I believe that ye will dispose you well, and so I pray God ye do, and have you in his blessed governance.

Written at the head town of Norfolk, this Tuesday. Your own

HUGH at FENNE.

Norwich, Tuesday, March or April, between 1467 and 1469. 7 and 9 E. IV.



LETTER CCLVIII.—(XXIII. vol. ii. p. 3.)

We have in this letter a most curious and authentic account of the marriage of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, with Margaret, daughter of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and sister of Edward IV., and of the subsequent diversions exhibited at Bruges in honour of it, written by John Paston, an eye-witness, who, with his brother Sir John Paston, Knight, attended in the retinue of a princess. The description here given affords us a high idea of the splendour of the court of the duke, and of the politeness of the courtiers.

To my right reverend and worshipful mother, Margaret Paston, dwelling at Caister, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful mother, I recommend me unto you as humbly as I can think, desiring most heartily to hear of your welfare and heart's ease, which I pray God send you as hastily as any heart can think.

Please it you to weet, that at the making of this bill, my brother, and I, and all our fellowship, were in good heele (*health*), blessed be God.

As for the guiding here in this country, it is as worshipful as all the world can devise, and there were never Englishmen had so good cheer out of England that ever I heard of.

As for tidings here, but if (*unless*) it be of the feast, I can none send you; saving, that my Lady Margaret[1] was married on Sunday last past at a town that is called The Dame,[2] three miles out of Bruges, at five of the clock in the morning; and she was brought the same day to Bruges to her dinner; and there she was received as worshipfully as all the world could desire; as with procession with ladies and lords, best beseen of any people that ever I saw or heard of. Many pageants were played in her way in Bruges to her welcoming, the best that ever I saw; and the same day my Lord, the Bastard,[3] took upon him to answer twenty-four knights and gentlemen within eight days at justs of peace; and when that they were answered, they twenty-four and himself should turney with other twenty-five the next day after, which is on Monday next coming; and they that have justed with him into this day have been as richly beseen, and himself also, as cloth of gold, and silk, and silver, and goldsmith's work, might make them; for of such gear, and gold, and pearl, and stones, they of the Duke's court, neither gentlemen, nor gentlewomen, they want none; for without (*unless*) that they have it by wishes, by my truth I heard never of so great plenty as here is.

This day my Lord Scales[4] justed with a

[1] Margaret Plantagenet, sister of Edward IV., according to this account, was married on Sunday the 3rd of July, 1468. 8 E. IV.

[2] [Damme.]

[3] Anthony Count de la Roche, called the Bastard of Burgundy, was a natural son of Duke Philip the Good, by Johanna of Prulles, famous for his wit, courage, and polite accomplishments. He was born in 1421, and died in 1504.

[4] Anthony Widville, or Woodville, Lord Scales, &c., and afterwards Earl Rivers, son of Sir Richard Widville, by Jaqueline of Luxemburgh, Duchess Dowager of Bedford, and brother of Elizabeth, queen of Edward IV., was born about 1441, and became the most distinguished warrior, statesman, and most learned gentleman of his time. In the 7 Edward

lord of this country, but not with the Bastard; for they made (*a*) promise at London, that none of them both should never deal with other in arms; but the Bastard was one of the lords that brought the Lord Scales into the field; and of misfortune a horse struck my Lord Bastard on the leg, and hath hurt him so sore that I can think he shall be of no power to accomplish up his arms; and that is great pity, for by my truth I trow (*think*) God made never a more worshipful knight.

And as for the Duke's court, as of lords, ladies, and gentlewomen, knights, esquires, and gentlemen, I heard never of none like to it, save King Arthur's court. And by my troth, I have no wit nor remembrance to write to you half the worship that is here; but what lacketh, as it cometh to mind I shall tell you when I come home, which I trust to God shall not be long tofore. We depart out of Bruges homeward on Tuesday next coming, and all folk that came with my Lady of Burgoyn (*Burgundy*) out of England, except such as shall abide here still with her, which I wot (*know*) well shall be but few.

We depart the sooner, for the Duke[1] hath word that the French king[2] is purposed to make war upon him hastily, and that he is within four or five days' journey of Bruges, and the Duke rideth, on Tuesday next coming, forward to meet with him; God give him good speed and all his; for by my troth they are the goodliest fellowship that ever I came amongst, and best can behave them, and most like gentlemen.

Other tidings have we none here, but that the Duke of Somerset[3] and all his bands departed well beseen out of Bruges a day before that my lady the Duchess came thither, and they say here that he is to Queen Margaret that was, and shall no more come here again, nor be holpen by the Duke.

No more, but I beseech you of your blessing as lowly as I can, which I beseech you forget not to give me every day once; and, mother, I beseech you that ye will be good mistress to my little man, and to see that he go to school.

I sent my cousin Daubeney five shillings by Calle's man for to buy for him such gear as he needeth: and, mother, I pray you this bill may recommend me to my sisters both, and to the master, my cousin Daubeney, Sir James, Sir John Stylle, and to pray him to be good master to little Jack,[4] and to learn him well; and I pray you that this bill may recommend me to all your folks, and to my well-willers; and I pray God send you your heart's desire.

Written at Bruges the Friday next after St. Thomas.[5]

Your son and humble servant,

J. PASTON, *the younger*.

Bruges,
Friday, 8th of July,
1468. 8 E. IV.

IV. he challenged and vanquished the Bastard of Burgundy in a grand and solemn just in Smithfield; at which time the promise mentioned in this letter was made. This accomplished nobleman was beheaded at Pomfret, in June 1483, by the command of the Protector, Richard Duke of Gloucester.

[1] Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, was born in 1433, and was slain in battle, near Nancy, in Lorrain, in 1477.

[2] Charles VII. It is worthy of remark how cautious the writers of these times were not to give the title of King of France to the ruler of that kingdom, but to style him the French King. In this place (and I have observed it in others) the word "Kyng" (intending to go on with, of France) was written without consideration, and then, on observing it, immediately crossed out, and "Frensche Kyng" put in its place.

[3] Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, an adherent to Henry VI. and his queen Margaret, commanded at the battle of Tewkesbury, in 1471; which being lost, he fled to sanctuary, whence he was taken and beheaded.

[4] This little John, whose school education J. Paston seems so anxious about, must have been born before 1464, and most probably died under age, if he was his son, as Sir William Paston, knight, who, as some pedigrees state, was born in 1464, stands in the pedigree as heir to his father; but I rather think that J. Paston had not been married at this time, and that this "lytyll man" was not his son.

[5] This must mean either the 3rd or 7th day of July, the one being the translation of St. Thomas the Apostle, the other of St. Thomas à Becket. I believe it means the latter.

LETTER CCLIX.—(LXXV. vol. iv. p. 295.)

The exact date of this letter is not easily determined, nor is it of any consequence, it only shows that one of the family of Fastolf of Suffolk pretended a claim to Caister, and intended coming to assert that claim with a large fellowship: whether this was Thomas Fastolf, the son of the lady who had some time before applied to J. Paston for his assistance towards regaining the livelihood of her son out of the hands of those who had the wardship of him, does not appear. I have ventured to fix the date of this letter to 1468, as it most probably was written about that time. Relic Sunday is the Sunday fortnight after Midsummer-day.

To Sir John Paston, Knight, be this delivered in haste.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine; letting you weet that Blicklíng of Heylesdon came from London this week, and he is right merry, and maketh his boast that within this fortnight at Heylesdon should be both new lords and new officers; and also this day was brought me word from Caister, that Rysing of Fretton should have heard said in divers places there, as he was in Suffolk, that Fastolf of Conghawe maketh all the strength that he may, and proposeth him to assault Caister, and to enter there if he may, insomuch that it is said that he hath a five score men ready, and sendeth daily spies to understand what fellowship keep the place; by whose power, or favour, or supportation, that he will do this I know not, but ye wot well that I have been affrayed (*frightened*) there before this time, when that I had other comfort than I have now; and I cannot well guide nor rule soldiers, and also they set not by a woman as they should set by a man; therefore I would ye shotld send home your brothers or else Daubeney to have a rule, and to take in such men as were necessary for the safeguard of the place, for if I were there, without I had the more sadder (*graver*) or worshipful persons about me, and there come a meny [1] of knaves and prevailed in their intent, it should be to me but a villainy. And I have been about my livelihood to set a rule therein, as I have written to you, which is not yet all performed after mine desire, and I would not go to Caister till I had done; I will no more days make thereabout if I may, therefore in any wise send somebody home to keep the place, and when that I have done and performed that I have begun, I shall purpose me thither-ward if I should do there any good, and else I had lever (*rather*) be thence.

I have sent to Nicholas and such as keep the place, that they should take in some fellows to assist and strength them till ye send home some other word, or some other man to govern them that be therein, &c.

I marvel greatly that ye send me no word how that ye do, for your elmyse (*enemies*) begin to wax right bold, and that putteth your friends both in great fear and doubt, therefore purvey that they may have some comfort that they be no more discouraged, for if we lose our friends it shall (*be*) hard in this troublesome world to get them again.

The blessed Trinity speed you in your matters, and send you the victory of your elmyse [*enemies*], to your heart's ease and their confusion.

Written at Norwich, the Saturday next before Relic Sunday, in haste.

I pray you remember well the matters that I wrote to you for in the letter that ye had by James Gresham's man, and send me an answer thereof by the next man that cometh, &c.

By you mother,
MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Saturday, 9th of July,
1468. 8 E. IV.

[1] [*Meny*—a following. Penn translates *many*.]

LETTER CCLX.—(LXXVI. vol. iv. p. 299.)

On the back of this letter is the following memorandum:—"Sir T. Howys agreith to sell the manor of Caister to the Duke of Norff. and movith thereto my Lord Cardenall." It was in consequence of this agreement with Sir Thomas Howys, one of the executors of Sir John Fastolf, that the Duke of Norfolk, I suppose, claimed the manor and castle of Caister, and in pursuit of that claim undertook to besiege it in the manner explained in the following letters. What Sir Thomas Howys says of J. Paston must be believed with caution, as they had disagreed concerning the executorship of Sir John Fastolf's will.

To my most honourable Lord Cardinal[1] *and Archbishop of Canterbury.*

MOST reverend and my right good lord, I recommend me to your gracious lordship in my most humble wise; please your lordship to weet that my Lord (*of*) Norfolk's counsel hath now late moved Sir William Yelverton, knight, and me, to be proffered for to purchase the manor of Caister and certain other lordships that were my master Fastolf's, whom God pardon! out excepted the manor of Gunton that your lordship desireth to purchase, and other certain manors that my master Fastolf's friends have desired to be proffered;[2] and because the pretens (pretended) bargain that John Paston in his lifetime surmitted (*surmised*),[3] by colour of which he intended to have all my master Fastolf's lands in Norfolk and Suffolk for nought, saving the high reverence of your estate, was not just nor true; and because that I, with other of my master Fastolf's executors, may have whereof to dispose in charityful deeds to do for his soul, I have condescended the rather that my said Lord of Norfolk shall be proffered to the purchase of the said manor of Caister and other manors that may be spared to the increase of his livelihood in this land, and these covenants to be engrossed up within short time as by All Halowaunce[4] in case your lordship be agreed and pleased withall, whereupon I would beseech your noble lordship to let me weet your good pleasure and advice in this behalf.

And because my said Lord (*of*) Norfolk is so near of blood to your highness knitted, that moved me to be the more willing to condescend to the foresaid purchase, and so trusting your lordship would be right well pleased withall. Written at Norwich the 10th day of October, in the eighth year of the reign of Edward IV.

Your poor chaplain,

THOMAS HOWYS.

Norwich, Monday, 10th of October, 1468. 8 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXI.—(LXXVII. vol. iv. p. 303.)

This letter informs us of the preparations for the defence of Caister, and gives us a very minute account of the several merits of the four warlike men sent down to be useful when it should be attacked.

To my right well-beloved brother, John Paston, Esq., being at Caister, or to John Daubeney there, be this letter delivered.

RIGHT well-beloved brother, I commend me to you; letting you weet that I have waged, for to help you and Daubeney to keep the place at Caister, four well assured and true men to do all manner of thing what that they be desired to do in safeguard or inforcing (*strengthening*) of the said place; and moreover they be proved men, and cunning (*expert*) in the war and in feats of arms, and they can well shoot both guns and cross-bows, and amend and string them, and devise bulwarks, or any things that should be a strength

[1] Thomas Bourchier, Bp. of Ely, was translated to Canterbury in 1454. He died an old man, in 1486.

[2] [Fenn reads *preferred*.]

[3] [*Surmised* cannot be the meaning of the word. *Procured* or *fraudulently procured* seems the sense here required.]

[4] In orig. *all Halowaunce*, Allhallows, Nov. 1. Fenn omits all.]

to the place, and they will as need is keep watch and ward, they be sad (*serious*) and well-advised men, saving one of them, which is bald, and called William Peny, which is as good a man as goeth on the earth saving a little, he will, as I understand, be a little copschotyn [1] (*high-crested*), but yet he is no brawler but full of courtesy, much upon (*much like*) James Halman; the other three be named Peryn Sale, John Chapman, Robert Jack's Son (*Jackson*), saving that as yet they have none harness come, but when it cometh it shall be sent to you, and in the mean while I pray you and Daubeney to purvey them some.

Also a couple of beds they must needs have, which I pray you by the help of my mother to purvey for them till that I come home to you; ye shall find them gentlemanly comfortable fellows, and that they will and dare abide by their tackling, and if ye understand that any assault should be towards; I send you these men, because that men of the country there about you should be frayed (*frightened*) for fear of loss of their goods; wherefore if there were any such thing towards, I would ye took of men of the country but few, and that they were well assured men, for else they might discourage all the remanent.

And as for any writing from the king, he hath promised that there shall come none, and if there do his unwarys[2] (*with his privity*), your answer may be this how the king hath said, and so to delay them till I may have word, and I shall soon purvey a remedy.

I understand that ye have been with my Lord of Norfolk now of late, what ye have done I wot not; we see that he shall be here again this day. Moreover I trow John Alford shall not long abide with my lord; I shall send you tidings of other things in haste, with the grace of God, who, &c. Written on Wednesday next before St. Martin.

JOHN PASTON.

I fear that Daubeney is not all there (*altogether*) best stored to continue household long; let him send me word in haste, and I will relieve him to my power, and ere long too I hope to be with you.

Roger Ree is sheriff of Norfolk, and he shall be good enough. The escheator I am not yet ascertained of.

Also, that these men be at the beginning entreated as courteously as ye can.

Also, I pray you to send me my flower[3] by the next messenger that cometh.

Also, as for my Lord Fitzwalter's obligation I know none such in mine adward as yet.

Also, the obligation of the Bishop of Norwich's obligation, I never saw it that I remember, wherefore I would and pray my mother to look it up.

Also, as for the Bible[4] that the master hath, I wend the utmost price had not past five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) and so I trow he will give it, weet I pray you.

Also, as for Sir William Barber and Sir William Falgate, I would, if they can purvey for themselves, full fain be discharged of them.

London, Wednesday,
9th November, 1468. 8 E. IV.

[1 *Copschotyn* is *cup-shotten*, apt to get a little drunk.]

[2 I do not understand this sentence, perhaps it means, "unless they take him unexpectedly." [We think "his unwarys" means *without* his privity.]

[3 This may mean flour for household use; or it may signify his flower, his device or cognisance.

[4 This must mean some MS. copy, for at this time there was only one printed edition of the Bible, which would have sold even then for a much greater sum than is here mentioned. I mean "Biblia Latina. Moguntiæ, per J. Fust and P. Schöffer, 1462."

LETTER CCLXII.—(LXXVIII. vol. iv. p. 309.)

At a time when his keeping possession of Caister was doubtful, it was a stroke of policy in Sir John Paston to gain the goodwill of the queen by presenting her chaplain to the free chapel at Caister, though his intention had been to have united it to the mastership of his college there, and this he does not now despair of accomplishing, as it was probable that the queen's chaplain would soon have such preferment as would induce him to resign this. The difference of opinion between the parson who was to receive the money, and him who was to pay it, is a curious anecdote, and the cautious determination of Sir John likewise is worthy observation, that this priest "must have it as it was haddo befor." The following entry is taken from the institution books of the Bishop of Norwich:—

"Cantaria in Cayster-hall.
Lib. xi. p. 170. 21 Mar. 1468. Mr. Iohēs Yetton S. T. P. ad col. Epl pr. laps."

By which it appears that Sir John Paston's presentation either was not allowed, or was not made out in time, and that the bishop presented by a lapse.

To my well-beloved brother, John Paston, or to John Daubeney, in his absence.

RIGHT worshipful and well-beloved brother, I commend me to you, letting you weet that Sir Thomas Howes had a free chapel in Caister whereof the gift belongeth to me, which chapel as I understand should be in the old time, ere the place at Caister were built, within the moat, wherefore I am but the better pleased; and so it is now that at the special request of the queen and other especial good lords of mine, I have given it to the bearer hereof called Master John Yotton, a chaplain of the queen's; nevertheless in time past I purposed that the master of the college should have had it, and so ere long to I hope he shall, wherefore I think he must take possession, and that is the cause of his coming; wherefore I pray you make him good cheer; he is informed that it should be worth an hundred shillings by year, which I believe not; I think it dear enough (*at*) forty shillings by year; he must have it as it was had before.

Item, this day I understand that there be come letters from my mother, and you, and Daubeney, wherein I shall send you answer when I have seen them.

No more at this time, for within this three days I shall let you have knowledge of other matters.

Written the 17th day of March.

Whither he needeth induction, or institution, or none, I wot not; if it need, brother, ye may seal any such thing as well as I. Master Stephen can tell all such things.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

London,
Friday, 17th of March,
1468. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXIII.—(LXXIX. vol. iv. p. 311.)

The curiosity of this letter consists in the cautions given by W. Paston to the bailiff for the safe and secret conveyance of the money, and in his attention to the good keeping of his horse Bayard. William Paston was brother to John Paston, and uncle to Sir John, and probably wrote this letter in the reign of Edward IV. Edward IV. was in Norfolk in 1469, and again in 1474.

To the bailiff of Mautby.

MASTER bailiff I recommend me unto you; praying you that ye will send me by William Cocks, bearer hereof, four nobles in gold, put into the same box that this bill is in as though it were evidence, for I have told the messenger that he should bring me nothing but evidence, for he is in a manner departing out of my service, wherefore I would not he knew so much of my counsel, and as for the remanent I would ye should keep it till I come myself.

And if Bayard be unsold, I pray you let him be made fat against the king come into the country, whatsoever I pay for the keeping of him, and I shall weet how good a courser I shall be myself at my coming into the country, by the grace of God, who have you in keeping. Written at Heveningham.

By your WILLIAM PASTON.

Heveningham, Suffolk,

Perhaps 1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXIV.—(XXIV. vol. ii. p. 11.)

Before the invention of printing, the number of writers and copiers was very great; most monasteries and religious houses having an office called a scriptorium, wherein several writers were almost constantly employed in copying books on various subjects, missals and books of psalms, &c. richly and elegantly adorned with illuminations, &c. Men of fortune and learning likewise occasionally employed copiers to transcribe books for their libraries. W. Ebesham was one of those who pursued this employment and wrote a good hand; he complains of poverty, and petitions to have his account discharged. One of the articles in the bill is dated 30th of October, 1468, 8 E. IV.: what follows therefore was done after that day; so that perhaps the bill was not delivered, nor this letter written, before the next year, 1469.

To my most worshipful master, Sir John Paston, Knight.

My most worshipful and most special master, with all my service most lowly I recommend (*me*) unto your good mastership, beseeching you most tenderly to see me somewhat rewarded for my labour in the great book which I wrote unto your said good mastership; I have oftentimes written to Pampyng, according to your desire, to inform you how I have laboured in writings for you, and I see well he spake not to your mastership of it; and God knoweth I lie in sanctuary[1] at great costs and amongst right unreasonable askers.

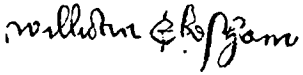
I moved this matter to Sir Thomas (*Lewis*) lately, and he told me he would move your mastership therein, which Sir Thomas desired me to remember well what I have had in money at sundry times of him.

(*Then comes the account, as stated more at large in the following bill.*)

And in especial I beseech you to send me for alms one of your old gowns, which will countervail much of the premises I wot well; and I shall be yours while I live, and at your commandment; I have greatly missed[2] of it God knows, whom I beseech preserve you from all adversity; I am somewhat acquainted with it.

Your very man,
WM. EBESHAM.

About 1469,
9 E. IV.



Following appeareth, parcelly, divers and sundry manner of writings, which I, William Ebesham, have written for my good and worshipful master, Sir John Paston, and what money I have received, and what is unpaid.[3]

	s.	*d.*
"First, I did write to his mastership a little book of physic, for which I had paid by Sir Thomas Lewis, in Westminster.		20
"Item, I had for the writing of half the Privy Seal, of Pampyng . .		8
"Item, for the writing of the said whole Privy Seal,[4] of Sir Thomas .	2	
"Item, I wrote eight of the witnesses[5] in parchment but after 14*d.* apiece, for which I was paid of Sir Thomas	10	
"Item, while my said master was over the sea in midsummer term, Calle set me at work to write two times the Privy Seal in paper, and then after clearly in parchment . . .	4	8
And also I wrote at the same time one more of the longest witnesses, and other diverse and necessary writings, for which he promised me 10*s.* (whereof I had of Calle but 4*s.* 8*d.*) due 5*s* 4*d.*	5	4
Carried forward. . . .	24	4

[1] Why he was in sanctuary I know not, but it appears that it was expensive being there. [Most likely for debt.]

[2] [*Grete myst* in orig. Probably *great want.*]

[3] We are here furnished with a curious account of the expenses attending the transcribing of books previous to the noble art of printing. At this time the common wages of a mechanic were, with diet, 4*d.*, and without diet 5½*d.* or 6*d.* a day; we here see that a writer received 2*d.* for writing a folio leaf, three of which he could with ease finish in a day, and I should think that many quick writers at that time would fill four, five, or even six in a day: if so, the pay of these greatly exceeded that of common handicraft men.

[4] Some grant, or other matter, which was to pass the Privy Seal.

[5] The depositions of witnesses.

	s.	d.
Brought forward	24	4
"Item, I received of Sir Thomas at Westminster 30th October,[1] 8 E. IV. 1468	3	4
"Item, I did write two quires of paper of witnesses, every quire containing 14 leaves after 2*d.* a leaf .	4	8
"Item, as to the Great Book:—[2] . .		
"First, for writing of the Coronation; and other Treatises of Knighthood, in that quire which containeth a 13 leaves and more, 2*d.* a leaf. . .	2	2
"Item, for the Treatise of War in four books, which containeth 60 leaves, after 2*d.* a leaf	10	
"Item, for Othea,[3] an epistle, which containeth 43 leaves	7	2
Carried forward	51	8

[1] This exactly ascertains the date of this receipt to be the 30th of October, 1468. 8 E. IV.

[2] This Great Book seems to have contained various treatises.

[3] Othea means a Treatise on Wisdom.

[4] De Regimine Principum.—A Treatise Concerning the Government of Princes, and by being written for a penny each leaf, I suppose it was in quarto.

[5] This either means ornamenting the whole with red capital letters, or writing the heads of the several treatises or chapters in red letters. [*Rubricking.*]

[6] "Und p'o m° libro script' xxvij^{s} cu' diu' chal." This in the original follows "Sum' non sol. 41^{s}. 1^{d}."

The following account of payments for writing, &c. is extracted from an original quarto MS. in the editor's possession, containing the various expenses of Sir John Howard, knight, of Stoke by Nayland, in Suffolk, (afterwards Duke of Norfolk).

Item the vijth yere of Kynge Edward ye iiijth and ye xxviij day of July (1467). My mast' rekened wt Thomas Lympmor of Bury, and my mast' peid hym—

	s.	d.
For viij hole vynets,* p'se y^{e} vynett xij^{d} .	viij	
It^{m}. for xxj dī vynets, p'se y^{e} dī vynett, iiij^{d}	vij	
It' for Psalmes lettres, xv^{c}† and dī, y^{e} p'se, of C iiij^{d}	v	ij
Carried forward . .	xx	ij

* Borders, flowers, or flourishes at the beginning of a book, chapter, &c.—[vignettes.]

† xv^{c} and dī=1500 and an half.

	s.	d.
Brought forward	51	8
"Item, for the Challenges and the Acts of Arms, which is 28 leaves . .	4	8
"Item, for De Regimine Principum,[4] which containeth 45 leaves, after 1 penny a leaf, which it is right well worth	3	9
"Item, for rubrishing[5] of all the book	3	4
	63	5

	£.	s.	d.
Sum received . . .	0	22	4
Sum unpaid . . .	0	41	1[6]
Sum total. .	3	3	5

WILLIAM EBESHAM.

	s.	d.
Brought forward . .	xx	ij
It' for p'ms lettres, lxiij^{c}.‡ p'se of a Cj^{d} . . .	v	ij
It' for wrytynge of a quare and dī, p'se ye quayr xx^{d}	ij	vi
It' for wrytynge of a Calender		xij
It' for iij quayres of velym, p'se ye quayr xx^{d}	v	
It' for notynge of v quayres and ij leves, p'se of ye quayr§ viiij	iij	vij
It' for capital drawynge iij^{c} and dī y^{e} p'se	iij	
It' for floryshynge of capytallis v^{c} . . .	v	
It' for byndynge of y^{e} boke‖	xij	

The wyche p'cellis my mast' paid hȳ yis day and he is content. . . . . 1 ij

This is an account of a limner or illuminator of manuscripts, who resided at Bury.

‡ lxiij^{c}=6300.

§ A quire of vellum from this entry seems to consist of four leaves, and his receiving only 3*d.* for noting two leaves might be accounted for, by the last leaf not being full: the drawing and flourishing of the capital letters seems very cheap.

‖ 12*s.* appears a great price for binding a book, but it is so stated in the original account.

LETTER CCLXV.—(LXXX. vol. iv. p. 313.)

The reader cannot help being interested in the family scenes here laid before him; the pleasure his mother expresses at her son's engagement, and the good and prudent advice she gives him relative to his marriage shows her anxiety for his future happiness. The desire which she has to have her daughter (Margery, I suppose) introduced into the family of some noble lady, shows her concern for her education, at the same time that it hints at their not being comfortable together. The handsome character given of Sir John Paston by my Lord Scales, and repeated to him by his mother, shows her satisfaction at hearing so good a report of him.

To Sir John Paston.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, thanking you for my seal that ye sent me, but I am right sorry that ye did so great cost thereupon, for one of forty pence should have served me right well; send me word what it cost you and I shall send you money therefor; I sent you a letter by a man of Yarmouth, send me word if ye have it, for I marvel ye sent me none answer thereof by Juddy.

I have none very (*certain* or *true*) knowledge of your insurance (*engagement*), but if ye be insured, I pray God send you joy and worship together, and so I trust ye shall have if it be as it is reported of her;[1] and anemps (*before*) God ye are as greatly bound to her as ye were married, and therefore I charge you upon my blessing that ye be as true to her as she were married unto you in all degrees, and ye shall have the more grace and the better speed in all other things.

Also I would that ye should not be too hasty to be married till ye were sure of your livelihood, for ye must remember what charge ye shall have, and if ye have not to maintain it it will be a great rebuke; and therefore labour that ye may have releases of the lands, and be in more surety of your land or than (*before*) ye be married.

The Duchess of Suffolk[2] is at Ewelm, in Oxfordshire, and it is thought by your friends here, that it is done that she might be far and out of the way, and the rather feign excuse because of age or sickness if that the king would send for her for your matters.

Your enemies be as bold here as they were before, wherefore I cannot think but that they have some comfort;[3] I sent to Caister that they should be wary[4] in keeping of the place as ye did write to me; haste you to speed your matters as speedily as ye can that ye may have less fellowship at Caister, for the expenses and costs be great, and ye have no need thereof, and [*if*] ye remember you well what charges ye have beside, and how your livelihood is despoiled and wasted by your adversaries.

Also I would ye should purvey for your sister[5] to be with my Lady of Oxford,[6] or with my Lady of Bedford[7] or in some other worshipful place whereas ye think best, and I will help to her finding, for we be either of us weary of other; I shall tell you more when I speak with you; I pray you do your devyr (*endeavour*) herein as ye will my comfort and welfare and your worship, for divers causes which ye shall understand afterward, &c.

I spake with the Lord Scales at Norwich, and thanked him for the good lordship that he had showed to you, and desired his lordship to be your continual good lord; and he swore by his troth he would do that he might do for you, and he told me that Yelverton the justice had spoken to him in your matter, but he told me *not* what; but I trow and (*if*) ye desired him to tell you he would. Ye are beholden to my lord of his good report of you

[1] Who the lady is does not appear in this letter, but it most probably meant Anne Hault.

[2] Alice, widow of William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, was the daughter and heir of Thomas Chaucer, Esq. of Ewelm, and grand-daughter of our famous poet, Geoffrey Chaucer.

[3] [*Comfort* is here meant for *support*.]

[4] [Fenn translates *beware*. In orig. *be war*.]

[5] This was most probably Margery Paston, with whom the whole family were very soon after the writing of this letter so much displeased for having without their consent contracted herself in marriage to Richard Calle.

[6] Elizabeth, the daughter of Sir John Howard, knight, and widow of John de Vere, Earl of Oxford.

[7] Jaqueline, the widow of John Plantagenet, Duke of Bedford, was at this time the wife of Richard Widville, Earl Rivers, by whom she was the mother of Anthony Widville, Lord Scales, the nobleman mentioned in this letter: she died in 1472.

in this country, for he reported better of you than I trow ye deserve. I felt by him that there hath been proffered him large proffers on your adversaries' part again you.

Send me word as hastily as ye may after the beginning of the term how ye have sped in all your matters, for I shall think right long till I hear some good tidings.

Item, I pray you recommend me to the good master[1] that ye gave to the chapel of Caister, and thank him for the great cost that he did on me at Norwich; and if I were a great lady he should understand that he should fare the better for me, for me seemeth by his demeaning he should be right a good man.

Item, I send you the ouch[2] with the diamond, by the bearer hereof. I pray you forget not to send me a kersche of cr'melle[3] for neckerchiefs for your sister Anne, for I am schent (*blamed*) of the good lady that she is with because she hath none, and I can none get in all this town.

I should write more to you but for lack of leisure; God have you in his keeping, and send you good speed in all your matters. Written in haste on Easter Monday.

By your mother,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Monday,
3d of April, 1469.
9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXVI.—(LXXXI. vol. iv. p. 319.)

Edward IV. came into Norfolk in the spring of the year in 1469. We see the desire which noblemen had to be honourably attended on such occasions, and the interest they employed to procure a respectable retinue when they came to meet their sovereign. John Paston in this case applied to the lady to find out her husband's intentions, and it appears that his application was successful.

To Master Sir John Paston.

SIR, I pray you recommend me to my Lord Scales's good lordship, and to let him weet that in like wise as his lordship gave me in commandment I have inquired what the gentleman's answer was that my Lord of Norfolk sent to await upon him at the king's coming into this country; his answer was to my Lord of Norfolk's messenger, that he had promised my Lord Scales to await upon him at the same season, and inasmuch as he had promised my Lord Scales, he would not false his promise for no man on live (*alive*). I found the means that the said gentleman's wife moved her husband with the same matter as though she had asked him of her own head, and he told her that he had given this answer; this gentleman is Sir William Calthorpe,[4] but I pray you tell my Lord Scales that ye understand not who it is, for he prayed me to be secret therein.

I pray with all my heart hie you home in haste, for we think long till ye come; and I pray you send me word whether ye shall be made a Christian[5] man ere ye come home or not; and if so be that ye send any man home hastily, I pray you send me an hat[6] and a bonnet by the same man, and let him bring the hat upon his head for (*fear of*) mis-

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[1] Dr. John Yotton, to whom Sir John Paston had given the chapel in Caister in 1468.

[2] An ouch is a collar of gold, formerly worn by women: a gold button, set with some jewel, is likewise so called, and that most probably was the ornament here mentioned to be sent to Sir John by his mother; we may suppose it was intended as a present to his betrothed bride.

[3] A kersche of cr'melle, perhaps means a kerchief of cremell, crewel or worsted, to be made into neck-handkerchiefs for her daughter Anne, who appears to have been with some lady of consequence for education and board.

[4] Sir William Calthorpe, knight, had been High Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk, both in this and the preceding reign, and died very old in 1494. His second wife was Elizabeth, daughter and co-heir of Sir Miles Stapleton, knight, of Ingham.

[5] If this mean that Sir John Paston was now to be christened it appears somewhat extraordinary, and what else it can mean I know not, unless we may infer from this expression an entrance into some religious society.

[6] We have here a proof of the early introduction of hats; and J. Paston's care that his might not be put out of shape, is worthy a beau of the present age.

fashioning of it; I have need to both, for I may not ride nor go out at the doors with none that I have, they be so lewd (*shabby*); a murrey bonnet, and a black or a tawney hat; and God send you your desire; written at Caister, the 7th day of April. Your

Caister, Friday, 7th of April, 1469. 9 E. IV. JOHN PASTON.

LETTER CCLXVII.—(LXXXII. vol. iv. p. 323.)

A copy of this and the following letter are written upon the same piece of paper, but without signature or address. The following memorandum on the back of the paper, however, ascertains both. "Copea Litērz Dūi de Scales ad conciliū Duc Norff et alijs (*alios*) in favore J. Paston mil. eò quod maritaret Cognatā suam Annā Hawte." The contents of these letters sufficiently ascertain the advantages arising from forming connexions with families of consequence; no sooner was an alliance proposed, but both the father and son take Sir John Paston and his affairs under their protection; the Duke of Norfolk's counsel (of which Lord Scales was one) were immediately to take care that no further injuries were to be committed upon his property, and the servants and dependants of these powerful noblemen are to do all in their power to give him every assistance. This marriage never took effect, and the manner in which this affair is several times mentioned, serves only to involve it in mystery. It appears here that the lady's connexions were great, and that she must have been nearly related to the queen.

WORSHIPFUL and my right good friend, I commend me to you; and whereas I am informed that my Lord of Norfolk pretendeth title to certain lands of Sir John Paston's which were late of Sir John Fastolf, it is said that by the commandment and supportation of my said lord certain his servants felleth wood, maketh great waste, and distrained the tenants of the said lands, to the great damage of the said Sir John Paston and his said tenants; and also that my said lord intendeth to enter certain places of the same; and forasmuch as marriage is fully concluded betwixt the said Sir John Paston and one of my nearest kinswomen, I doubt not that your reason well conceiveth that nature must compel me the rather to show my good will, assistance, and favour unto the said Sir John in such things as concern his inheritance; and because I am one of my said lord's counsel, and must and will tender his honour, I heartily pray you that it may like you to advertise and advise my said lord and yours that all such entries, felling of wood, distraining of tenants, and all such matters like, touching the said lands or any part of them, be ceased unto such time as a reasonable mean may be found by my said lord's counsel, my lord my father's, and other cousins and friends of my said kinswoman this next term, as may be to my said lord's honour, and and to the saving of the right title of the said Sir John Paston.

Over this I pray you that ye will inform my good friend James Hobart of the premisses, that he may advertise my said lord in likewise; and that ye will give credence unto William Paston, and I shall be well willed to do that may be to your pleasure, with God's mercy.

From Westminster, the 10th day of April.

SCALES.

Westminster, Monday, 10th of April, 1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXVIII.—(LXXXIII. vol. iv. p. 325.)

RIGHT trusty and well-beloved, I greet you well; and forasmuch as a marriage is fully concluded betwixt Sir John Paston and my right near kinswoman Hawte, I will that ye and all other my servants and tenants understand that my lord my father, and I, must of nature and reason show unto him our good assistance and favour in such matters as he shall have a do: wherefore I pray you heartily that ye will take the labour to come to Norwich to commune with William Paston, and to give credence unto him in such matters as he shall inform you of mine intent, and of certain persons with whom ye shall commune by the advice of the said William Paston, of such matters as touch the said Sir John Paston, praying you to tender this matter as ye would do mine own.

From Westminster, the 10th day of April.

Westminster, Monday, 10th of April, 1469. 9 E. IV. SCALES.

LETTER CCLXIX.—(LXXXIV. vol. iv. p. 327.)

This letter must have been written in 1469, as the thanks to his brother here given by Sir John Paston related to his proper and spirited conduct at Caister Place. His attention to whose success in his marriage with the daughter of Lady Boleyn shows his good nature, and his brotherly regard for him; and the advice which he gives him, respecting his behaviour both to the lady and her daughter, shows Sir John to be a man who not only knew the world, but likewise one who understood the passions and prejudices of individuals. He seemed to think too that a handsome young man could not fail of pleading his own cause successfully with a young lady. Sir Godfrey, or Sir Jeffery Boleyn, was Lord Mayor of London about 1457 or 1458. He died in 1463, leaving Anne, the daughter of Thomas Lord Hoo and Hastings, his widow, by whom he had three daughters, Isabel, Anne, and Alice; the last of these was the lady to whom J. Paston wished to pay his addresses, and who afterwards married Sir John Fortescue, knight. The elder married William Cheyney, Esq., and the other became the wife of Sir Henry Heydon, of Baconsthorp, knight, and all were great aunts to Queen Anna Boleyn, the mother of our sovereign Elizabeth.

To my brother, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful and verily well-beloved brother, I heartily commend me to you, thanking you of your labour and diligence that ye have in keeping of my place at Caister so surely, both with your heart and mind, to your great business and trouble; and I again ward have had so little leisure that I have not sped but few of your errands, nor cannot before this time.

As for my Lady Boleyn's disposition to you ward, I cannot in no wise find her agreeable that ye should have her daughter for all the privy means that I could make, insomuch I had so little comfort by all the means that I could make that I disdained in mine own person to commune with her therein; nevertheless I understand that she sayeth, "what if he and she can agree I will not let it, but I will never advise her thereto in no wise." And upon Tuesday last past she rode home into Norfolk; wherefore as ye think ye may find the mean to speak with her yourself, for without that in mine conceit it will not be; and as for Crosby, I understand not that there is no marriage concluded between them, nevertheless there is great language that it is like to be; ye be personable, and, peradventure, your being once in the sight of the maid, and a little discovering of your good will to her, binding her to keep it secret, and that ye can find in your heart with some comfort [*support*] of her to find the mean to bring such a matter about as shall be her pleasure and yours, but that this ye cannot do without some comfort of her in no wise; and bear yourself as lowly to the mother as ye list, but to the maid not too lowly, nor that ye be too glad to speed, nor too sorry to fail; and I always shall be your herald both here, if she come hither, and at home when I come home, which I hope hastily, within forty days at the farthest; my mother hath a letter which can tell you more, and ye may let Daubeney see it.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

I suppose and (*if*) ye call well upon R. Calle he shall purvey you money. I have written to him enough.

London, April,
1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXX.—(LXXXV. vol. iv. p. 331.)

This curious letter furnishes us with the solemn declarations of a sick man on his death-bed, relative to the authenticity of the will of Sir John Fastolf, which was proved by John Paston, and which was reported not to have been the real will of that knight. The Pastons had many long and expensive suits at law on this account, which were not finished either in the life-time of John Paston or in that of his son Sir John Paston. These solemn assertions of a priest, and a man of learning and character, thus conscientiously declared, must have had great weight in clearing the character of J. Paston from these foul aspersions, especially as they came from so respectable a man as Friar Mowth or Mowght, who was a brother of consequence in the monastery at Norwich (see Letter xxix. p. 20).

John Paston, to his brother Sir John Paston.

SIR, please it you to weet that my mother and I communed this day with Friar Mowght, to understand what his saying shall be in the court when he cometh up to London, which

is in this wise: he sayeth that at such time as he had shriven Master Brackley[1] and howselled him both, he let him weet that he was informed by divers persons that the said Master Brackley ought for to be in great conscience for such things as he had done and said, and caused my father, whom God assoil, for to do and say, also, in proving of Sir John Fastolf's will; to whom the said Master Brackley answered thus again; "I am right glad that it cometh to you in mind for to move me with this matter in discharging of my conscience against God;" saying furthermore to the said Friar Mowght, by the way that his soul should to, that the will that my father put into the court was as verily Sir John Fastolf's will as it was true that he should once die. This was said on the Sunday when the said Brackley wend (*thought*) to have died then; on the Monday he revived again, and was well amended till on the Wednesday, and on the Wednesday he sickened again, supposing to have died forthwith, and in his sickness he called Friar Mowght, which was confessor unto him, of his own motion, saying unto him in this wise, "Sir, whereas of your own motion ye moved me the last day to tell you after my conscience of Sir John Fastolf's will likewise as I knew; and now of mine own motion, and in discharging of my soul, for I know well that I may not escape but that I must die in haste, wherefore I desire you that (*you*) will report after my death that I took it upon my soul at my dying that that will that John Paston put in to be proved was Sir John Fastolf's will;" and the said Brackley died the same Wednesday.

And whereas ye would have had Richard Calle to you as on Sunday last past, it was this Tuesday ere I had your letter; and whereas it pleaseth you for to wish me at Eltham, at the tourney,[2] for the good sight that was there, by truth I had lever (*rather*) see you once in Caister-hall than to see as many king's tourneys as might be betwixt Eltham and London.

And, Sir, whereas it liketh you to desire to have knowledge how that I have done with the Lady Boleyn, by my faith I have done nor spoken nought in that matter, nor nought will do till time that ye come home, and (*if*) ye come not this seven year; notwithstanding the Lady Boleyn was in Norwich in the week after Easter, from the Saturday till the Wednesday, and Heydon's wife and mistress Alice both, and I was at Caister and wist not of it; her men said that she had none other errand to the town but for to sport her, but so God help me, I suppose that she wend (*thought*) I would have been in Norwich for to have seen her daughter. I beseech you with all my heart hie you home though ye should tarry but a day, for I promise you your folk think that ye have forgotten them, and the most part of them must depart at Whitsuntide at the furthest, they will no longer abide; and as for R. Calle we cannot get half a quarter the money that we pay for the bare household beside men's wages. Daubeney nor I may no more without coinage.

Your
JOHN PASTON.

April, 1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXXI.—(LXXXVI. vol. iv. p. 335.)

As King Edward often made excursions, and by his insinuating manner and address conciliated the minds of his subjects, and induced them to bestow liberal gifts upon him, it cannot be certainly known whether this visit to Norwich was merely to raise money, or whether, having intimations of the discontent of the Earl of Warwick, the king was endeavouring to make himself popular, the better to encounter and defeat any designs of that nobleman. His manner of travelling, his attendants, and the familiar conversations which are drawn in this letter with ease and precision, interest the reader as well as delineate the manners of the times. We find the Duke of Gloucester accompanied the king, but we hear nothing of the Duke of Cla-

[1] The meaning of this is, after he had heard his confession and administered the extreme sacrament to Master Brackley.

[2] Sir John Paston is said to have been the king's champion at this tournament at Eltham.

rence; he most probably was at this very instant with the Earl of Warwick, forming those plans which soon after for a time replaced Henry upon the throne.—Edward's conversation with William Paston was certainly very proper and becoming a king desirous that justice should be done according to the law; for what can show this intention more strongly than the following words, "I will neither treat nor speak for him, but I will let the law proceed." His conversation likewise with Brandon was both manly and spirited.

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

To begin, God yeld (*shield or preserve*) [1] you for my hats. The king hath been in this country, and worshipfully received into Norwich, and had right good cheer and great gifts in this country, wherewith he holdeth him so well content that he will hastily be here again, and the queen also, with whom by my poor advice ye shall come, if so be that the term be done by that time that she come into this country; and as for your matters here, so God help me, I have done as much as in me was, in labouring of them, as well to my Lord Rivers[2] as to my Lord Scales,[3] Sir John Wydville, Thomas Wingfield and others about the king. And as for the Lord Rivers, he said to my uncle William, Fairfax, and me, that he should move the king to speak to the two Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk that they should leave of their titles of such land as were Sir John Fastolf's, and if so be that they would do nought at the king's request, that then the king should command them to do no waste, nor make none assaults nor frays upon your tenants nor places, till such time as the law hath determined with you or against you; this was said by him the same day in the morning that he departed at noon; whether he moved the king with it or not I cannot say, my uncle William thinks nay; and the same afternoon following I told my Lord Scales that I had spoken with my lord his father in like form as I have rehearsed, and asked him whether that my lord his father had spoken to the king or not, and he gave me this answer, that whether he had spoken to the king or not that the matter should do well enough.

Thomas Wingfield told me, and swore unto me, that when Brandon moved the king, and besought him to show my lord favour in his matters against you, that the king said unto him again "Brandon, though thou canst beguile the Duke of Norfolk and bring him about the thumb as thou list, I let thee weet thou shalt not do me so; for I understand thy false dealing well enough." And he said unto him, moreover, that if my Lord of Norfolk left not of his hold of that matter that Brandon should repent it, every vein in his heart, for he told him that he knew well enough that he might rule my Lord of Norfolk as he would, and if my lord did anything that were contrary to his laws, the king told him he knew well enough that it was by nobody's means but by his, and thus he departed from the king.

Item, as by words, the Lord Scales and Sir John Wydville took tender your matters more than the Lord Rivers

Item, Sir John Wydville told me, when he was on horseback at the king's departing, that the king had commanded Brandon of purpose to ride forth from Norwich to Lynn, for to take a conclusion in your matter for you; and he bade me that I should cast no doubts but that ye should have your intent, and so did the Lord Scales also; and when that I prayed them at any time to show their favour to your matter, they answered that it was their matter as well as yours, considering the alliance betwixt you.[4]

Commune with Jakys Hawte, and he shall tell you what language was spoken between the Duke of Suffolk's counsel, and him, and me; it is too long to write, but I promise you ye are beholden to Jakys, for he spared not to speak.

Item, the king rode through Heylesdon Warren towards Walsingham, and Thomas Wingfield promised me that he would find

[1] [*Yeld* is rather *thank*. It has occurred in these volumes already more than once in that sense.]

[2] Richard Wydville, Earl Rivers, father to the queen, was at this time Lord Treasurer. This nobleman and his eldest son Sir John Wydville, were in August following both beheaded at Northampton, by a riotous mob headed by one Robert of Riddesdale.

[3] Anthony Wydville, Lord Scales, was second son to the Earl Rivers.

[4] This refers to the contract between Sir John Paston and Anne Hawte.

the means that my Lord of Gloucester,[1] and himself both should show the king the lodge[2] that was broken down, and also that they would tell him of the breaking down of the place.

Contrary to these matters and all the comfort that I had of my Lord Scales, Sir John Wydville, and Thomas Wingfield, my uncle William saith that the king told him (*with*) his own mouth, when he had ridden forth by the lodge in Heylesdon Warren, that he supposed as well that it might fall down by the self as be plucked down, for if it had been plucked down he said that we might have put in our bills of it when his judges sat on the oyer and determiner in Norwich, he being there; and then my uncle saith how that he answered the king, that ye trusted to his good grace that he should set you thorough with both the dukes by mean of treaty, and he saith that the king answered him that he would neither treat nor speak for you, but for to let the law proceed, and so he saith that they departed; and by my troth and (*if*) my Lord Treasurer encourage you not more than he did us here, ye shall have but easy help as on that party, wherefore labour your matters effectually, for by my troth it is needy; for, for all their words of pleasure, I cannot understand what their labour in this country hath done good, wherefore be not over swift till ye be sure of your land, but labour sore the law, for by my troth till that be passed with you ye get but easy help as I can understand.

I had with me one day at dinner in my mother's place, she being out, the Lord Scales, Sir John Wydville, Sir John Howard, Nicholas Howard, John of Parr, Thomas Garnet, Festus Cheyney, Trussel the knight's son, Thomas Boleyn, qua propter (*in short*) Brampton, Bernard, and Broom, Perse Howse, W. Tonstal, Lewis de Bretayl, and others, and made them good cheer, so as they held them content.

Item, my Lord of Norfolk gave Bernard, Broom, nor me no gowns at this season, wherefore I awaited not on him; notwithstanding I offered my service for that season to my lady, but it was refused, I wot by advice; wherefore I purpose no more to do so. As for Bernard, Barney, Broom, and W. Calthorpe are sworn my Lord of Gloucester's men, but I stand yet at large notwithstanding my Lord Scales spoke to me to be with the king, but I made no promise so to be, for I told him that I was not worth a groat without you, and therefore I would make no promise to nobody till they had your good will first, and so we departed.

It was told me that there was out a privy seal for you to attend upon the king northward; and if it be so, I think verily it is done to have you from London by craft, that ye should not labour your matters to a conclusion this term, but put them (*in*) delay. I pray you purvey you on it to be at home as soon as the term is done, for by God I take great hurt for mine absence in divers places, and the most part of your men at Caister will depart without abode and (*if*) ye be not at home within this fortnight. I pray you bring home points and laces of silk for you and me.

JOHN PASTON.

1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXXII.—(LXXXVII. vol. iv. p. 345.)

On the back of this letter is written, "pro marritag. intr Rlem Call and Margam Paston." "A pleasant lrē to Sir J. Paston, from his brother J. Paston, wherein the stoutness of Sir John is somewhat declared." The stoutness, or rather family pride, both of Sir John Paston and his brother, are discovered in this letter, in the behaviour of the one to the Duke of Norfolk, and in the disdain which the other showed to the idea of his sister's marriage with a person in trade. Richard Calle has been often mentioned in the course of these letters, and he seems to have been a confidential friend of the family. This, however, seems in the opinion of J. Paston by no means to have been sufficient to have authorised his pretensions to become the husband of his sister. [This, however, seems strangely in contradiction with Letter cclv. p. 7, where, according to Fenn, Sir John had agreed to the marriage, but only wished it deferred.] We here see the origin of the Duke of Norfolk's claim to Caister to have arisen from his supposed purchase of it from two of Sir

[1] Richard Duke of Gloucester, afterwards King Richard III.

[2] For a full account of the mischief here done, see Letter ccxxxviii. vol. i. p. 191.)

John Fastolf's executors: this claim he pursued, and in a few months after the writing of this letter, besieged the place in form, having been, I presume, refused a peaceable entry by John Paston, who defended it for his brother, and in which defence Daubeney and others lost their lives. The letter is curious, and written in such an easy and familiar style as greatly to interest the reader in its contents. [It is, however, strangely stuffed with the needless oaths, which were too customary at the time. Fenn says "Daubeney and others lost their lives;" the others were two men of the Duke of Norfolk's party.]

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

Sir, pleaseth it to understand, that I conceive, by your letter which that ye sent me by Juddy, that ye have heard of Richard Calle's labour which he maketh by our ungracious sister's assent, but whereas they write that they have my good will therein, saving your reverence, they falsely lie of it, for they never spake to me of that matter, nor none other body in their name. Lovell asked me once a question whether that I understood how it was betwixt Rd Calle and my sister; I can think that it was by Calle's means, for when I asked him whether Calle desired him to move me that question or not, he would have gotten it away by hums and by haas, but I would not so be answered; wherefore at the last he told me that his eldest son desired him to spere (*inquire*) whether that Richard Calle were sure of her or not, for he said that he knew a good marriage for her, but I wot he lied, for he is whole with Richard Calle in that matter; wherefore to that intent that he nor they should pick no comfort of me, I answered him that and (*if*) my father, whom God assoil! were alive, and had consented thereto, and my mother, and ye both, he should never have my good will for to make my sister to sell candle and mustard in Framlingham, and thus, with more which were too long to write to you, we departed [*parted*].

And whereas it pleaseth you in your letter to cry me mercy for that ye sent me not such gear as I sent you money for; I cry you mercy that I was so lewd (*rude*) to encumber you with any so simple a matter, considering the great matters and weighty that ye have to do; but need compelled me, for in this country is no such stuff as I sent to you for.

Also, whereas it pleaseth you to send to Richard Calle to deliver me money, so God help me I will none ask him for myself, nor none had I of him, nor of none other man but of mine own since ye departed, but that little that I might forbear (*spare*) of mine own I have delivered to Daubeney for household, and paid it for you in men's wages, and therefore whoever sendeth you word that I have spent you any money since ye went hence, they must give you another reckoning, saving in meat and drink, for I eat like an horse, of purpose to eat you out at the doors, but that needeth not for you come not within them, wherefore so God help me, the fellowship here thinks that ye have forgotten us all, wherefore and (*if*) anything be ill ruled when ye come home wyte (*blame*) it yourself for default of oversight.

Also, I understand for very certain, and it is sent me so word out of my lord's house, that this Pentecost (*Whitsuntide*) is my lord's counsel at Framlingham, and they purpose this week and the next to hold courts here at Caister, and at all other manors that were Sir John Fastolf's, purchased of Yelverton and of Sir Thomas Howys, whom God assoil, and how that my demeaning should be it is too late to send to you for advice, wherefore and (*if*) I do well I ask no thank, and if I do ill I pray you lay the default on over little wit, but I purpose to use the first point of hawking, to hold fast and (*if*) I may; but so God help me, and (*if*) they might pull down the house on our heads I wyte (*blame*) them not, which I trust to God to keep them from; for by God that bought me, the best earl in England would not deal so with my lord and my lady as ye do, without making of some means to them; so God help me, whosoever advise you to do so he is not your friend; and I may I trust to God to see you about Midsummer or before, for in good faith I ween ye purpose you that it shall be Easter ere ye come home, for all your servants here ween that ye purpose no more to deal with them, but to leave them here in hostage to my Lord of Norfolk.

Also, Sir, I pray you purvey what inn[1] that my brother Edmund shall be in, for he loseth sore his time here I promise you; I pray you send me word by the next messenger that

[1] [The inn to be purveyed was an inn of court no doubt. But Edmund became a soldier, and was in garrison at Calais in 1473.]

cometh, and I shall either send him or bring him up with me to London.

Also, Sir, we poor sans deniers (*moneyless men*) of Caister have broken three or four steel-bows, wherefore we beseech you and there be any maker of steel-bows in London which is very cunning, that ye will send me word, and I shall send you the bows that be broken, which be your own great bow, and Robert Jackson's bow, and John Pampyng's bow; these three have cast so many calvys that they shall never cast quarrels (*square-headed arrows*) till they be new made.

I pray you find the means that my lord may have some reasonable mean proffered, so that he and my lady may understand that ye desire to have his good lordship; I promise you it shall do you ease and your tenants both, and God preserve (*you*).

JOHN PASTON.

Caister, Whitsuntide,
May, 1469. 9 E. IV.
Whitsunday was on the 21st May, in 1469.

LETTER CCLXXIII.—(LXXXVIII. vol. iv. p. 351.)

On the back of this letter is the following memorandum, "Lrã Rici Calle Margerie Paston filie Johis Paston a'ri quã plea duxit in uxorem." We cannot read this letter without entering into the private family-concerns of the Pastons, and however we may think with them that their daughter may have made, without their knowledge and consent, an improper contract, yet we must pity the lover. In ancient times families intermarried more amongst those of their own rank than at present; the gentry considered those in trade as moving in a different sphere to them; they dealt with them and required their attendance, but they scorned to intermarry. The extension of commerce and the large fortunes raised by the merchants and men of business have however broken down those barriers of distinction; and not only the gentleman but the nobleman, now often select their wives from the city, and introduce into their families the daughters of those, who, by their honourable and extensive dealings in various branches of traffic, have enriched themselves, and trained up their children to become that elevated situation which their beauty, their education, and their good qualities, enables them to adorn. The picture drawn in this letter is a true one, and gives us a much better idea of ancient family matters than the most laboured disquisition of a dry historian.

To Mistress Margery Paston.

MINE own lady and mistress, and before God very true wife, I with heart full sorrowful recommend me unto you, as he that cannot be merry, nor nought shall be till it be otherwise with us than it is yet, for this life that we lead now is neither pleasure to God nor to the world, considering the great bond of matrimony that is made betwixt us, and also the great love that hath been and as I trust yet is betwixt us, and as on my part never greater; wherefore I beseech Almighty God comfort us as soon as it pleaseth him, for we that ought of very right to be most together are most asunder, meseemeth it is a thousand year ago since that I spake with you, I had lever (*rather*) than all the good in the world I might be with you; alas, alas! good lady, full little remember they what they do that keep us thus asunder, four times in the year are they accursed that let (*hinder*) matrimony; it causeth many men to deem in them they have large conscience in other matters as well as herein; but what lady suffer as ye have done; and make you as merry as ye can, for I wis, lady, at the long way, God will of his righteousness help his servants that mean truly, and would live according to his laws, &c.

I understand, lady, ye have had as much sorrow for me as any gentlewoman hath had in the world, as would God all that sorrow that ye have had had rested upon me, and that ye had been discharged of it, for I wis, lady, it is to me a death to hear that ye be entreated otherwise than ye ought to be; this is a painful life that we lead. I cannot live thus without it be a great displeasure to God.

Also like you to weet that I had sent you a letter by my lad from London, and he told me he might not speak with you, there was made so great await upon him and upon you both: he told me John Thresher came to him in your name, and said that ye sent him to my lad for a letter or a token which I should have sent you, but he trust him not, he would not deliver him none; after that he brought him a ring, saying that ye sent it him, commanding him that he should deliver the letter or token to him, which I conceive since by my lad it was not by your sending, it was by my

mistress and Sir James's advice;[1] alas! what mean they? I suppose they deem we be not ensured together, and if they so do I marvel, for then they are not well advised, remembering the plainness that I brake to my mistress at the beginning, and I *suppose* by you, both,[2] and ye did as ye ought to do of very right, and if ye have done the contrary, as I have been informed ye have done, ye did neither conciensly (*conscientiously*) nor to the pleasure of God, without ye did it for fear and for the time, to please such as were at that time about you; and if ye did it for this cause, it was a reasonable cause, considering the great and importable[3] calling upon that ye had, and many an untrue tale was made to you of me, which, God know it, I was never guilty of.

My lad told me that my mistress your mother asked him if he had brought any letter to you, and many other things she bare him on hand, and among all other at the last she said to him that I would not make her privy to the beginning, but she supposed I would at the ending; and as to that God knoweth, she knew it first of me and none other; I wot not what her mistress-ship meaneth, for by my troth there is no gentlewoman alive that my heart tendereth more than it doth her, nor is loather to displease, saving only your person, which of very right I ought to tender and love best, for I am bound thereto by the law of God, and so will do while that I live whatsoever fall of it; I suppose and (*if*) ye tell them sadly (*seriously*) the truth, they will not damn their souls for us; though I tell them the truth they will not believe me as well as they will do you, and therefore, good lady, at the reverence of God be plain to them and tell the truth, and if they will in no wise agree thereto, betwixt God, the devil, and them be it, and that peril that we should be in I beseech God it may lie upon them and not upon us; I am heavy and sorry to remember their disposition. God send them grace to guide all things well, as well (*as*) I would they did; God be their guide, and send them peace and rest, &c.

I marvel much that they should take this matter so heedely (*cautiously*)[4] as I understand they do, remembering it is in such case as it cannot be remedied, and my desert upon every behalf it is for to be thought there should be none obstacle against it; and also the worshipful that is in them is not in your marriage, it is in their own marriage, which I beseech God send them such as may be to their worship and pleasure to God, and to their hearts' ease, for else were it great pity. Mistress, I am afraid to write to you, for I understand ye have showed my letters that I have sent you before this time; but I pray you let no creature see this letter, as soon as ye have read it let it be burnt, for I would no man should see it in no wise; ye had no writing from me this two year,[5] nor I will not send you no more, therefore I remit all this matter to your wisdom; Almighty Jesu preserve, keep, and (*give*) you your heart's desire, which I wot well should be to God's pleasure, &c.

This letter was written with as great pain as ever wrote I thing in my life, for in good faith I have been right sick, and yet am not verily at ease, God amend it, &c.

1469. 9 E. IV. RICHARD CALLE.

LETTER CCLXXIV.—(XXV. vol ii. p. 17.)

Humphrey Lord Stafford was created Earl of Devonshire in May 1469, and beheaded at Bridgewater, the 17th of August following, by command of the king, for abandoning the Earl of Pembroke before the battle of Banbury; by which means the rebels were victorious.

To my worshipful brother, Sir John Paston, be this bill delivered in haste.

RIGHT worshipful brother, I recommend me unto you, letting you to weet that my Lord Stafford was made Earl of Devonshire upon Sunday; and as for the king, as I understand,

[1] [Probably Sir James Gloys.]

[2] [The construction is rather obscure here, but we think he means to speak of the plainness with which I and (I suppose) you, both, brake the matter to my mistress, if ye did as ye ought to have done, &c.]

[3] [*Importable*—unbearable.]

[4] [We rather think *headily*—angrily, madly—is here meant.]

[5] [This would seem to put letter cclv. at least as far back as 1466, and is scarcely reconcileable with Letter cclxxii., where the marriage seems spoken of as recent.]

he departyt (*departs*) to Walsingham[1] upon Friday come sev'night, and the queen also, if God send her hele (*health*). And as for the king, (*he*) was appointed for to go to Calais, and now it is put off.

And also as for the going to the sea, my Lord of Warwick's ships go to the sea, as I understand. None other tidings I can none write unto you, but Jesu have you in his keeping.

Written at Windsor on Monday after Whitsunday in haste, &c.

By your brother,[2]

JAMES HAWTE.

Whitsun Monday,
22nd of May, 1469. 9 Ed. IV.

LETTER CCLXXV.—(XXVI. vol. ii. p. 19.)

This letter shows the attention which the city of Norwich wished to pay to the queen on her reception, and during her residence there. Henry Spelman married Ela, daughter and coheir of William de Narburgh, and was the first of that family that settled at Narborough in Norfolk.

To the right reverend Sir Henry Spelman, recorder of the city of Norwich, be this letter delivered.

RIGHT reverend Sir, I recommend me to you. Please it you to know this same day came to me the sheriff of Norfolk[3] himself, and told me that the queen[4] shall be at Norwich upon Tuesday[5] come sev'night surely. And I desired to have know of him, because this should be her first coming hither, how we should be ruled, as well in her receiving as in her abiding here. And he said he would not occupy him therewith, but he counselled us to write to you to London, to know of them that been of counsel of that city, or with other worshipful men of the same city, that been knowing in that behalf; and we to be ruled thereafter as were according [*fitting*] for us; for he let me to weet that she would desire to be received and attended as worshipfully as ever was queen afore her.[6] Wherefore I, by the assent of my brethren aldermen, &c., pray you heartily to have this labour for this city, and that it please you, if it may be, that at that day ye be here in proper person. And I trust in God, that either in rewards or else in thankings both of the king's coming and in this, ye shall be pleased as worthy is. Written in haste at Norwich, the 6th day of July anno 9° Regis Edw^di^ quarti.

By your well-willer,

JOHN AUBRY,[7] &c.

Norwich,
Thursday, 6th of July,
1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXXVI.—(XXVII. vol. ii. p. 23.)

There is no date to this letter; whether it refers therefore to the coming of the king into Norfolk, in 1469 or in 1474, is uncertain and of little consequence; the chief reason for inserting it was to show the preparations expected to be made for the attending upon and receiving him. The peculiarity of the Duke of Norfolk's liveries is worthy notice, being to be made party-coloured of blue and tawny, having the left side of the former, and the right of the latter colour. Dresses of this kind may be seen in various illuminated manuscripts of this age. [From the time of Richard II. there had been many enactments against the practice of keeping large bands of liveried retainers. The prohibition was renewed 8 Edward IV. c. 2, and the penalty was one hundred shillings for every person, "other than his menial servant, officer, or man learned in the one law or the other," so retained by any one "of what estate, degree, or condition that he be;" the fine to be repeated for every month "that any such person is so retained by him, by oath, writing, indenture, or promise," and a like penalty on the person retained. The exceptions, however, are numerous. "Provided

[1] This must have been on a pilgrimage to our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk.

[2] I do not know why he calls Sir John Paston his brother; for Sir John certainly never married Anne Hawte, who possibly might be the sister of James.

[3] Roger Ree was sheriff of Norfolk in 1469.

[4] Elizabeth, queen of Edward IV.

[5] 18th of July, 1469.

[6] [A necessary caution, perhaps, on account of her birth.]

[7] John Aubry was mayor of Norwich in 1469.

also, that this ordinance do not extend to any livery given or to be given at the king's or queen's coronation, or at the stallation of an archbishop or bishop, or erection, creation, or marriage of any lord or lady of estate, or at the creation of knights of the Bath, or at the commencement of any clerk in any university, or at the creation of serjeants in the law, or by any guild, fraternity, or mystery corporate, or by the mayor and sheriffs of London, or any other mayor, sheriff, or other chief officer of any city, borough, town, or port of this realm of England for the time being, during that time, and for executing their office or occupation; nor to any badges or liveries to be given in defence of the king and of this realm of England: nor to the constable and marshal, nor to any of them for giving any badge, livery, or token for any such feat of arms to be done within this realm; nor to any of the wardens toward Scotland for any livery, badge, or token of them to be given from Trent northward, at such time only as shall be necessary to levy people for defence of the said marshes, or any of them." We should think that now, at least, a coach and four might be driven through an act like this, although the Earl of Oxford could not escape; but to be sure he was taken by surprise, and entrapped by a powerful antagonist. But, as Hallam remarks, ('State of Europe during the Middle Ages,' vol. iii. p. 246,) "it appears that, far from these acts being regarded, it was considered as a mark of respect to the king" (and he cites this letter as a proof) "for the noblemen and gentry to meet him with as many attendants in livery as they could muster. Sir John Paston was to provide twenty men in their livery gowns, and the Duke of Norfolk two hundred. This illustrates the well-known story of Henry VII. and the Earl of Oxford, and shows the mean and oppressive conduct of the king in that affair, which Hume has pretended to justify."]

To my mother, and to my brother John Paston.

BROTHER, it is so that the king shall come into Norfolk in haste, and I wot (*know*) not whether that I may come with him or not; if I come, I must do make a livery of twenty gowns, which I must pick out by your advice; and as for the cloth for such persons as be in that country, if it might be had there at Norwich or not I wot not; and what persons I am not remembered.

If my mother be at Caister, as there shall be no doubt, for the keeping of the place while the king is in that country, that I may have the most part at Caister.[1]

And whether ye will offer yourself to wait upon my Lord of Norfolk or not, I would ye did that best were to do; I would do my lord pleasure and service, and so I would ye did, if I wist (*thought*) to be sure of his good lordship in time to come. He shall have two hundred in a livery blue and tawny,[2] and blue on the left side, and both dark colours.

I pray you send me word and your advice by Juddy of what men, and what horse I could be purveyed of, if so be that I must needs come; and of your advice in all things by writing, and I shall send you hastily other tidings. Let Sorrell[3] be well kept.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

LETTER CCLXXVII.—(LXXXIX. vol. iv. p. 359.)

We find by the conversation here given us between the Bishop of Norwich, Agnes Paston, and Margaret Paston, that a contract of marriage had been made between Margery Paston, the daughter of the latter, and Richard Calle, and that her family wished to have a hearing in the Bishop's Court, either to disprove it, or, if proved, to set it aside. The young lady's behaviour, and the account which both she and Richard Calle give of the contract, seem to confirm it, and obliged the bishop to take time to consider of the matter before any sentence could be pronounced; though he seemed to wish to have it in his power to adjust the matter to the satisfaction of the family. The expressions of Margaret Paston respecting her daughter must be read with some allowance; we must construe some of them as words of passion and resentment, arising from her avowal of her intentions to fulfil the contract, &c. [The bishop was still Walter Lyhert, or Hart, who died in 1472.]

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine; letting you weet that on Thursday last was, my mother and I were with my Lord of Norwich, and desired him that he would no more do in the matter touching your sister till that ye and my

[1] [This sentence is not clear. Perhaps "the most part" may mean the strongest party.]

[2] Tawny colour appears to have been a yellowish dusky brown orange colour, and much worn at this time.

[3] A horse so called.

brother and others that were executors to your father might be here together, for they had the rule of her as well as I; and he said plainly that he had been required so often to examine her, that he might not nor would no longer delay it, and charged me in pain of cursing that she should not be deferred, but that she should appear before him the next day; and I said plainly that I would neither bring her nor send her; and then he said that he would send for her himself, and charged that she should be at her liberty to come when he sent for her; and he said by his troth that he would be as sorry for her, and (*if*) she did not well, as he would be and (*if*) she were right near of his kin, both for my mother's sake and mine, and other of her friends, for he wist well that her demeaning had sticked sore at our hearts.

My mother and I informed him that we could never understand by her saying, by no language that ever she had to him, that neither of them were bound to other, but that they might choose, both; then he said that he would say to her as well as he could before that he examined her; and so it was told me by divers persons that he did as well and as plainly as (*if*) she had been right near to him, which were too long to write at this time, hereafter ye shall weet, and who were labourers therein; the chancellor[1] was not so guilty therein as I wend (*thought*) he had been.

On Friday the bishop he sent for her by Ashfield and other that are right sorry of her demeaning, and the bishop said to her right plainly, and put her in remembrance how she was born, what kin and friends that she had, and should have more if she were ruled and guided after them; and if she did not, what rebuke, and shame, and loss should be to her if she were not guided by them, and cause of forsaking[2] of her for any good, or help, or comfort that she should have of them; and said that he had heard say that she loved such one that her friends were not pleased with that she should have, and therefore he bade her be right well advised how she did; and said that he would understand the words that she had said to him whether it made matrimony or not, and she rehearsed what she had said, and said if those words made it not sure, she said boldly that she would make it surer ere than she went thence, for she said she thought in her conscience she was bound whatsoever the words were; these lewd words grieveth me and her grandam as much as all the remanent; and then the bishop and the chancellor both said that there was neither I nor no friend of hers would receive (*her*).

And then Calle was examined apart by himself, that her words and his accorded, and the time, and where it should have been done; and then the bishop said that he supposed that there should be found other things against him that might cause the letting thereof, and therefore he said he would not be too hasty to give sentence thereupon, and said that he would give over day till the Wednesday or Thursday after Michaelmas, and so it is delayed; they would have had her will performed in haste, but the bishop said he would none otherwise than he had said.

I was with my mother at her place when she was examined, and when I heard say what her demeaning was, I charged my servants that she should not be received in my house: I had given her warning, she might have been aware afore if she had been gracious; and I sent to one or two more that they should not receive her if she came; she was brought again to my place for to have been received, and Sir James told them that brought her that I had charged them all and she should not be received; and so my Lord of Norwich hath set her at Roger Best's, to be there till the day before said, God knoweth full evil against his will and his wife's if they durst do otherwise; I am sorry that they are cumyred (*cumbered*, or *troubled*) with her, but yet I am better paid (*satisfied*) that she is there for the while than she had been in other place, because of the sadness (*seriousness*) and good disposition of himself and his wife, for she shall not be sou'd

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[1] Dr. John Saresson, otherwise Wigenhale, was chancellor to the bishop from 1435 to 1471, and had other church preferment in the diocese.

[2] [And *be the* cause of *their* forsaking, &c. Many instances of this concise style will have been already noticed in these letters, and was by no means uncommon among our best writers to a much later period.]

(*suffered?*) there to play the brethel (*frail one*); I pray you and require you that ye take it not pensily (*heavily*), for I wot well it goeth right near your heart, and so doth it to mine and to others, but remember you, and so do I, that we have lost of her but a brethel, and set it the less to heart, for and (*if*) she had been good, wheresoever she had been, it should not have been as it is, for and (*if*) he were dead at this hour, she should never be at mine heart as she was. As for the divorce that ye write to me of, I suppose what ye meant, but I charge you upon my blessing that ye do not, nor cause none other to do, that should offend God and your conscience, for and (*if*) ye do, or cause for to be done, God will take vengeance thereupon, and ye should put yourself and others in great jeopardy, for wot it well she shall full sore repent her lewdness hereafter, and I pray God she might so. I pray you for mine heart's ease be ye of a good comfort in all things; I trust God shall help right well, and I pray God so do in all our matters; I would ye took heed if there were any labour made in the court of Canterbury for the lewd matter aforesaid.

But if the duke[1] be purveyed for, he and his wise counsel shall leave this country; it is told me that he saith that he will not spare to do that he is purposed for no duke in England. God help at need.[2]

Norwich, before Michaelmas,
1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXXVIII.—(XC. vol. iv. p. 367.)

The dispute concerning the possession of Caister now becoming a matter of great consequence, and the siege of it being determined upon by the Duke of Norfolk if some conciliatory plan could not be devised, Margaret Paston informs Sir John of the different schemes proposed; these she wishes him thoroughly to consider, and, if none should be adopted, at all events to succour his friends there. Sir John Heveningham, though engaged against the Pastons, shows himself not only a friend to them, but a faithful officer to his commander the Duke of Norfolk.

To Sir John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine; letting you weet that Sir John Heveningham was at Norwich this day, and spake with me at my mother's, but he would not that it should be understood, for my lord hath made him one of the captains at Caister of the people that should keep the watch about the place that no man should succour them, if my lord departed. I desired him to favour them if any man should come to them from me or you, and he would not grant it, but he desired me to write to you to understand, if that my lord might be moved to find surety to recompense you all wrongs, and [*if*] ye would suffer him to enter peaceably, and the law after his entry would deem it you; be ye advised what answer ye would give.

Item, since that I spake with him and the same day, a faithful friend of ours came unto me and moved me if that my lord might be intreated to suffer indifferent men to keep the place, and take the profits for both parties till the right be determined by the law; and my lord for his part, and ye for your part, to find sufficient surety that you neither should vex, let, nor trouble the said indifferent men to keep peaceably the possession of the said place, and to take the profits unto the time it be determined by the law to his behoof that the law deemeth it; and the said persons that so indifferently keep possession, before their entry into the said place, to find also sufficient surety to answer the party that the law deemeth it to of the profits during their possession, and to suffer him peaceably

[1] This I suppose relates to the Duke of Norfolk; the other duke most probably means either the Duke of Clarence or of Suffolk.

[2] On the back of the letter in an ancient hand is written, "A Lrē to Sr. Io. Paston from his mother, touching the good-will between hir daughter Margery P. and Ric. Call, who were after maryed together." It seems from this memorandum that the contract of marriage was proved and confirmed, and that in consequence of it a marriage took place between the parties.

to enter, or any in his name, whensoever they be required by the party to whom the right is deemed of all these premises; send me word how ye will be demeaned by as good advice as ye can get, and make no longer delay, for they must needs have hasty succour that be in the place, for they be sore hurt and have none help, and if they have hasty help it shall be the greatest worship that ever ye had, and if they be not holpen it shall be to you a great disworship; and look never to have favour of your neighbours and friends but if (*unless*) this speed well; therefore prend (*consider*)[1] it in your mind, and purvey therefore in haste; howsoever ye do, God keep you, and send you the victory of your enemies, and give you and us all grace to live in peace. Written on St. Giles's even, at nine of the bell at night.

Robin came home yester even, and he brought me neither writing from you, nor good answer of this matter, which grieveth me right ill that I have sent you so many messengers and have so feeble answers again.

By your mother,

MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Friday,
1 September, 1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXXIX. (XCI. Vol. iv. p. 371.)

Master Writtill, or Wrettell, the person to whom this letter is addressed, was a servant of the Duke of Clarence, and appears to have been sent down to endeavour at an accommodation between the besiegers and the besieged, during the truce which was then taken. Sir John Paston, however, seems fearful lest any appointment should be taken detrimental to his interest, though at the same time he would submit to anything rather than that his brother's and his servant's lives should be endangered. John Duke of Norfolk claimed this manor and castle of Caister under an agreement for a purchase, which had passed between him and Sir William Yelverton and Thomas Howys, two of Sir John Fastolf's executors. It does not appear that they could legally convey this estate, as, by Sir John Fastolf's will, it had been left for charitable uses, and towards founding and endowing a college, &c. &c. [What was Sir John Paston's right? It is nowhere clearly stated.]

To Master Writtill.

MASTER WRITTILL, I recommend me to you, beseeching you heartily, as mine whole trust is in you, that ye do your devoir to continue truce till Friday or Saturday in the morning, by which time I hope the messenger shall come, and that ye be not driven to take an appointment if ye can understand by any likelihood that it be able to be abydyn[2] and resisted, and that ye feel my brother's disposition therein as my trust is in you, praying you to remember that it resteth, as God help me, on all my weal; for, as God help me, I had lever (*rather*) the place were brenned (*burnt*), my brother and servants saved, than the best appointment that ever ye and I communed of should by my good-will be taken, if this message from the king may rescue it; and if it be so that my lord be removed by the king's commandment, which resteth with his honour, I may in time to come do him service as shall recompense any grudge or displeasure that he ever had or hath to me or mine; and ye, if it the rather by your wisdom and policy the mean above written may be had, shall be as sure of the service of my true brother and servants and me as ye can devise by my troth; for in good faith this matter sticketh more nigh mine heart and me than I can write unto you, and to my brother and servants more near than, as God knoweth, they wot of; wherefore, master Writtill, all our welfare resteth in you, beseeching you to remember it, for this matter is to all us either making or marring.

Item, as for Arblaster or Lovell, I cannot think that they or any of them may be with you, wherefore in you is all; and God have you in keeping.

Written at London, the next day after your departing; I shall send you more knowledge to-morrow, with God's grace.

Yours,

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

London, September.
1469. 9 E. IV.

[1] [*Pretend* in original; perhaps an error for *perpend*.]

[2] [So in original. Abydin is to be *delayed*. Fenn translates *avoided*.]

LETTER CCLXXX.—(XCII. vol. iv. p. 373.)

Sir John Paston in this letter gives further directions to Master Writtill, and informs him of what had passed at London, between the lords and himself, &c.; he appears likewise to rely much on his wisdom and discretion.

To Master Writtill.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, thanking you of your great labour which I have not as yet but I shall deserve to my power; and furthermore like you to weet that I have thought right long after you; nevertheless I remember well that ye dealt with right delayous people, my lord archbishop and other of my lords, and I dempt (*deemed*) because of your long tarrying that by your sad (*sage*) discretion all had been set thorough; nevertheless I understand by your writing that my Lord of Norfolk's counsel thinketh that his intent, which ye certified me by your writing, should be more to his worship than the appointments and rule made by the lords of the king's council, which be to my said Lord of Norfolk ner kyne (*nothing kind*), which appointments since your departing hath been largely remembered among the said lords here, thinking it in themselves so honourable to my Lord of Norfolk, that there should none of my lord's counsel well advised (*have*) moved to the contrary.

James Hobart[1] was sent from my (*Lord*) of Norfolk hither, and spake with my lord archbishop,[2] and answer he had of my said lord and how my lord tendered the matter yet and will; I trow he hath told you, and if he have not the bringer hereof shall inform you; and he brought this same appointment from my lord, that my lord was well agreed that I should occupy; for my part, if I should take no other appointment but according to your letter, it were hard for me and for my title to put my lord in that possession, for there is things in erthe (*scarcely*) to mine ease in your letter, [*or*] good for me in that appointment, saving the surety of my brother's life and my servants, which ye think doubtful if so be that they lack stuff, shot, and victuals; marvelling sore, and think it impossible in this short season, or in four times the season hithertowards, that they should lack either, without it so be that my lord's men have entered ought (*somewhat*) the place, and so had their stuff from them, which I cannot think. Also, Sir, for the time of your coming to my Lord of Norfolk, servants of my lord's were with my mother at Norwich, moving to send to my brother her son to deliver the place under such a form as your letter specifieth, and so I cannot understand what regard my lord's counsel taketh to my lords' letter and to your labour in this behalf, but that they offered as largely afore; ye writeth in your letter that ye durst not pass your credence, please you to remember that [*you*] said your credence afore the lords was right large, and as large as might well be in this matter, both to my lord's counsel of Norfolk to withdraw the siege, with more other matter as ye know, and to the justice of the peace, and to the sheriff and his officers, your authority was great enough to each of them.

Wherefore, Master Writtill, I never for this nor yet will take appointment in this matter but as my lords will and my lord archbishop, which, as well as I myself, have wholly put our trust to your discreet direction; and my said lord since your going, thinking you as meet a man in executing their commandment as could be chosen; nevertheless for answer to you at this season, my lord archbishop is northwards towards the king; howbeit, it is said, upon a meeting with my Lord of Clarence my lord shall return again; and as yester even he sent a servant of his to me, weening to his lordship (*his lordship thinking*) that Sir Humphrey[3] and

[1] This most probably was James Hobart, who, in 1478, was Lent-reader at Lincoln's Inn, and in 1487 attorney-general. He died in 1516, and lies buried in Norwich Cathedral; from him the present Earl of Buckinghamshire is lineally descended.

[2] George Nevile was translated from Exeter to York in 1464.

[3] Sir Humphrey Talbot was a captain at this siege, under the Duke of Norfolk.

ye were in Caister as was appointed, and ye should send to his lordship answer of the guiding there by writing, commanding me that, if any such writings came from you, if his lordship were not past twenty miles from London to come to his lordship with the same; understanding for certain that he is not yet so far; wherefore I will in all the haste possible ride night and day till I see his lordship, and after communication had with his lordship, as soon as is possible that a man may go betwixt, ye shall have an answer of his disposition; for his interest is such that, as I have written, I shall never do therein without him, as my cousin, bringer hereof, more plainly shall inform you; for I can think right well that, as ye writeth to me, my brother will not deliver the place to none earthly person but if (*unless*) he see writing from my lord.

It seemeth by your writing that my Lord of Norfolk's counsel intend not that my lord archbishop should deal in this matter, for he is not named in your letter, whereof I marvel; for it was moved to you at your departing hence the king's council should have taken direction in this matter, or else my lord cardinal,[1] my Lord of Clarence, my lord archbishop, and my Lord of Essex,[2] &c. Nevertheless, Master Writtill, all profit, manor, or livelihood laid apart, if it be so that through recklessness my brother and servants be in such jeopardy as ye have written to me, which should be half impossible in my mind that they should misuse so much stuff in four times the space, and that ye have evident knowledge by my said brother himself thereof; I will pray you to see him and them in surety of their lives, whatsoever shall fall of the livelihood, howbeit, I would not that my brother and servants should give up the place not for a thousand pounds if they might in any wise keep it and save their lives; and therefore, at the reverence of God, since it is so that my lord archbishop, and my lords all, and I, have put our trust in you, that ye will do your devoir to have the very knowledge of my brother himself, and not of my lord's men, whether he stand in such jeopardy as your letter specifieth or not, for I doubt not upon the sight of this letter, and of the letter that ye had before, that my brother will put no mistrust in you, considering that he knoweth that ye come from my lords and my lord archbishop and have my writing; and as for my lord archbishop's writing and answer, such as it shall be, ye shall have it in all haste possible, but I think verily that my lord escheweth to tell you anything without that he might speak with you alone, and methinketh verily that they ought not to let (*hinder*) you to speak with him alone, considering that ye have authority and writing from the lords so to do; and as for the justification of entering the place, and siege laying to the same, and the commandment of the justice of the peace and the sheriff to assist my lord in this guiding, I wot ye understand that the lords know all that matter, and ye heard it communed, and how they took it in their conceits.

There is no more, Master Writtill, but I commit all this writing unto your discretion, and as ye think best according to such men's desire as have intreated you therein and for my most avail, I pray you, Sir, so do, and I shall see unto your business, and labour that ye shall have cause to do for me in time coming, and as the bringer hereof shall tell you, and I pray God have you in his keeping.

Written at London, the 10th day of September.

By your friend for ever,

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

London, Sunday,
10th of September,
1469. 9 E. IV.

[1] Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Lord Cardinal.

[2] Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex.

LETTER CCLXXXI.—(XCIII. vol. iv. p. 383.)

My readers I make no doubt will be equally pleased with myself, in having so authentic an account of the manners of the times placed before them, wherein a disputed title to an estate is not contested in the courts of law, but by a regular and well conducted siege laid to the castle claimed by the besiegers. Every warlike preparation is made by both parties, and the assault and defence is carried on with the greatest military skill. The number of the besiegers is said by Blomefield to have amounted to three thousand, while the number of those who defended the place did not exceed thirty persons; a proof of the strength of the fortress attacked, which, with this handful of men, held out some time. The anxiety of Margaret Paston for the safety of her son and his companions interests us in her favour, and her advice to Sir John to apply to the Earl of Oxford for his assistance to raise the siege, though, if attended with success, he should enjoy the manor of Caister for his life, is a curious circumstance, and throws light upon the manners and politics of the times. [This was in fact a *legal* proceeding; and even at present, as we have before remarked, the holding or acquiring possession of premises by force is by no means unfrequent. "Disseisin, or forcible dispossession of freeholds," says Hallam ('Middle Ages,' vol. iii.), "makes one of the most considerable articles in our law books." He also adds in a note;—"If a man was disseised of his land, he might enter upon the disseisor and reinstate himself without course of law. In what cases this right of entry was taken away, or tolled, as it was expressed, by the death or alienation of the disseisor, is a subject extensive enough to occupy two chapters of Littleton. What pertains to our inquiry, is that, by *an entry* in the old law-books, we must understand an actual repossession of the disseisee, not a suit in ejectment, as it is now interpreted, but which is a comparatively modern proceeding. The first remedy, says Britton, of the disseisee is to collect a body of his friends (recoiller amys et force), and without delay to cast out the disseisors, or at least to maintain himself in possession along with them"—c. 44. This entry ought indeed, by 5 Ric. II., stat. i. c. 8, to be made peaceably; and the justices might assemble the posse comitatus to imprison persons entering on lands by violence (15 Ric. II., cap. 2); but these laws imply the facts that made them necessary." The law, as far as regards freeholds, is now rather modified than altered: "the entry must be made peaceably,"—and, as the law has now more vigour, any open breach of the public peace is no longer permitted, and the entry is usually made by a forcible surprise. Even as regards leasehold or yearly tenancies, it was only by the 1 & 2 Victoria, c. 74, that magistrates were empowered to give possession to landlords of premises of not more than 20*l.* a-year rent, where the tenant refused to give up possession. Unroofing the house, stopping the chimneys, and other means were occasionally resorted to in order to eject a refractory tenant. In the case of Caister, the right on either side appears very doubtful. Sir John Paston held it as executor to Sir J. Fastolf; but from the complaints of Howys, Worcester, the Abbot of Langley, and others, it would seem he was very dilatory in fulfilling the directions of the will, and, in fact, was treating it as his own property. On the other hand, Yelverton and Howys sold it to Norfolk, probably under the pretext of paying the bequests of the will, or at least their own; but the act of these two executors only could clearly convey no legal title. That these proceedings were customary, and considered not illegal, accounts also for the absence of any personal animosity. The Duke of Norfolk's party well knew that J. Paston could never be convicted of the murder, with which he was accused, but the charge would take an active opponent out of their way; while J. Paston, equally aware of the real state of the case, would not thereby be prevented from taking service under the Duke.]

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

I GREET you well, letting you weet that your brother and his fellowship stand in great jeopardy at Caister, and lack victuals, and Daubeney[1] and Berney[2] be dead, and divers other greatly hurt; and they fail gunpowder and arrows, and the place (*is*) sore broken with guns of the other party, so that but (*unless*) they have hasty help they be like to lose both their lives and the place, to the greatest rebuke to you that ever came to any gentleman, for every man in this country marvelleth greatly that ye suffer them to be so long in so great jeopardy without help or other remedy.

The duke hath been more fervently set [*determined*] thereupon, and more cruel, since that Writtill, my Lord of Clarence's man, was there, than he was before: and he hath sent for all his tenants from every place, and others, to be there at Caister on Thursday next coming, that there is then like to be the greatest multitude of people that came there yet; and they purpose then to make a great assault, for they have sent for guns to Lynn and other places by the sea's side, that, with their great multitude of guns with other shot and ordnance, there shall no man dare appear in the place, they shall hold them so busy with their great (*number of*) people that it

[1] John Daubeney, Esq., whose death is here mentioned, was a gentleman of a good family in the county of Norfolk.

[2] Osbert Berney, the other person here mentioned as dead, was not killed at this siege: he survived, and died without issue some years after, when he was buried in Bradeston Church in Norfolk, there being a brass-plate in the chancel to his memory.

shall not lie in their power within to hold it against them without God help them or (*they*) have hasty succour from you; therefore, as ye will have my blessing, I charge you and require you that ye see your brother be holpen in haste, and if ye can have none mean rather desire writing from my Lord of Clarence if he be at London, or else of my Lord Archbishop of York, to the Duke of Norfolk, that he will grant them that be in the place their lives and their goods, and in eschewing of insurrections with other inconveniences that be like to grow within the shire of Norfolk, this troublous werd (*tumultuous world*), because of such conventicles and gatherings within the said shire, for cause of the said place, they shall suffer him to enter upon such appointment or other like, taken by the advice of your counsel there at London if ye think this be not good, till the law hath determined otherwise, and let him write another letter to your brother to deliver the place up on the same appointment; and if ye think, as I can suppose, that the Duke of Norfolk will not agree to this because he granted this afore, and they in the place would not accept it, then I would the said messenger should with the said letters bring from the said Lord of Clarence, or else my lord archbishop, to my Lord of Oxford other letters to rescue them forthwith, though the said Earl of Oxford should have the place during his life for his labour; spare not this to be done in haste if ye will have their lives, and be set by (*esteemed*) in Norfolk, though ye should lose the best manor of all for the rescuse [*rescue*]. I had lever (*rather*) ye lost the livelihood than their lives; ye must get a messenger of the lords, or some other notable man, to bring these letters; do your devoir now, and let me send you no more messengers for this matter, but send me by the bearer hereof more certain comfort than ye have done by all other that I have sent before; in any wise let the letters that shall come to the Earl of Oxford, come with the letters that shall come to the Duke of Norfolk, that if he will not agree to the one, that ye may have ready your rescuse that it need no more to send, therefore God keep you.

Written the Tuesday next before Holy Rood day, in haste.

By your mother,
MARGARET PASTON.

Norwich, Tuesday,
12th of September,
1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXXXII.—(XCIV. vol. iv. p. 387.)

Sir John Paston here seems hurt at his mother's suspecting him of not exerting himself to the utmost in endeavouring either to accommodate matters, or to assist his brother and friends within the place. He shows himself likewise both a man of spirit in coming with a few to their relief if he had a place in Norfolk for their reception, and of feeling for the distress of those shut up in his castle at Caister. [We do not doubt that Sir John Paston was a man of courage and of feeling; but this is but a slight proof of either, particularly as he neither came nor sent any effective assistance. He does not, in fact, appear to attach much importance to his mother's news.]

To Margaret Paston.

MOTHER, upon Saturday last was Daubeney and Berney were alive and merry, and I suppose there came no man out of the place to you since that time that could have ascertained to you of their deaths; and as touching the fierceness of the Duke or of his people, showed since that time that Writtill departed, I trow it was concluded that truce and abstinence of war should be had ere he departed, which shall endure till Monday next coming; and by that time I trow that truce shall be taken till that day sev'nnight after, by which time I hope of a good direction [*that*] shall be had; and whereas ye write to me that I should sue for letters from my Lords of Clarence and York, they be not here, and if they wrote to him as they have done two times, I trow it would not avail; and as for to labour those letters and the rescue together, they be two sundry things, for when the rescue is ready, that the cost thereof is done, for if I be driven thereto to rescue it, ere they come there that should do it, it shall cost a thousand escutys, and as much after, which way were hard for

me to take while that I may do it otherwise; but as to say that they shall be rescued if all the lands that I have in England and friends may do it, they shall and (*if*) God be friendly, and that as shortly as it may goodly and well be brought about; and the greatest default earthly is money and some friends and neighbours to help, wherefore I beseech you to send me comfort with what money ye could find the means to get or chevise (*borrow upon interest*), upon surety sufficient or upon livelihood to be in mortgage or yet sold, and what people by likelihood your friends and mine could make upon a short warning, and to send me word in all the haste as it is needful; but, mother, I feel by your writing that ye deem in me I should not do my devoir (*endeavour*) without ye wrote to me some heavy tidings, and, mother, if I had need to be quickened with a letter in this need I were of myself too slow a fellow; but, mother, I ensure (*assure*) you that I have heard ten times worse tidings since the siege began than any letter that ye wrote to me, and sometimes I have heard right good tidings both; but this I assure you that they that be within have no worse rest than I have, nor casteth more jeopardy; but whether I had good tidings or ill, I take God to witness, that I have done my devoir as I would be done for in case like, and shall do till there be an end of it.

I have sent to the king to York, and to the lords, and hope to have answer from them by Wednesday at the furthest, and after that answer shall I be ruled, and then send you word, for till that time can I take none direction; and to encomfort you, despair you not for lack of victuals nor of gunpowder, nor be not too heavy nor too merry therefore; for and (*if*) heaviness or sorrow would have been the remedy thereof, I knew never matter in my life that I could have been so heavy or sorry for, and with God's grace it shall be remedied well enough, for by my troth I had lever (*rather*) lose the manor of Caister than the simplest man's life therein if that may be his salvation; wherefore I beseech[1] you to send me word what money and men ye think that I am like to get in that country; for the hasty purchase of money and men shall be the getting and rescue of it, and the salvation of most men's lives, if we take that way.

Also, this day I purpose to send to York to the king for a thing, which same only may by likelihood be the salvation of all; ye must remember that the rescue of it is the last remedy of all, and how it is not easy to get; and also ye send me word that I should not come home without that I come strong, but if I had had one other strong place in Norfolk to have come to, though I had brought right few with me, I should with God's grace have rescued it by this time, or else he should have been fain to have besieged both places ere yet, and (*if*) the duke had not kept Yarmouth out: but, mother, I beseech you send me some money, for by my troth I have but ten shillings; I wot not where to have more; and moreover I have been ten times in like case, or worse, within this ten weeks.

I sent to Richard Calle for money, but he sendeth me none; I beseech you to guide the evidence that Peacock can tell you of, and to see it safe, for it is told me that Richard Calle hath had right large language of them; I would not they come in his fingers: I have no word from you of them, nor whether ye have yet in your keeping the evidence of East Beckham out of his hands, nor whether ye have sent to my manors that they should not pay him no more money or not; also that it like you to give credence to Robin in other things.

Written the Friday next after Holy Rood day.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

London, Friday,
15th of September,
1469. 9 E. IV.

[1] The original word, in this and some similar cases, is *savacion*,—a better word for the purpose though long obsolete.]

LETTER CCLXXXIII.—(XCV. vol. iv. p. 395.)

This letter is written by Sir John Paston to his brother John Paston, to encourage him to hold out Caister Castle as long as he has hopes of relief: he tells him of the good opinion which is entertained of the courage and conduct of those in the place, but that those who besiege it are mentioned in a very different manner. The letter is curious, and written in a style to give both spirits and hope to the besieged.

To John Paston, and to none other.

I RECOMMEND me to you, and promise you that I have and shall labour and find the mean that ye shall have honour of your dealing, as ye have hithertowards, as all England and every man reporteth; and moreover I am in way for it by many divers ways, whereof there shall be one executed by this day fortnight at the furthest, and peradventure within seven days; and if ye may keep it so long I would be glad, and after that if ye have not from me other writing, that then ye do therein for your safeguard and your fellowship only and to your worships; and as for the place, no force therefore; ye know this hand, therefore needeth no mention from whom it cometh; and moreover they that be about you be in obloquy of all men; and moreover they have been written to by as special writing as might be, after the world that now is, and promise you that the Duke's counsel would that they had never begun it; and moreover they be charged in pain of their lives that though they get the place they should not hurt one of you; there is neither ye nor none with you, but, and (*if*) he knew what is generally reported of him, he or ye, and God fortune you well, may think him four times better in reputation of all folk than ever he was.

Beware whom ye make a counsel to this matter.

Also, I let you weet that I am in much more comfort of you than I may write, and they that be about you have cause to be more ferde (*afraid*) than ye have; and also beware of spending of your stuff of quarrels (*square-headed arrows*), powder, and stone (*stone bullets*), so that if they assault you ere we come that ye have stuff to defend you of over, and then of my life ye get no more; and that your fellowship be ever occupied in renewing of your stuff.

Written the Monday next after Holy Rood day.

I trow, though ye be not privy thereto, there is taken a truce new till this day sev'nnight.

Monday, 18th of September,
1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXXXIV.—(XCVI. vol. iv. p. 397.)

This well-written letter of Margaret Paston to Sir John Paston gives us a high opinion of her good sense and prudent conduct; she is justly displeased with him for supposing that she should knowingly send him false information: the good advice she gives him flows from her own reliance upon God, and from her knowledge of mankind; she laments her own inability to assist him with money, and recommends proper methods for the increase of his livelihood.

To Sir John Paston in haste, a matre.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine, letting you weet that methink by the letter that ye sent me by Robin that ye think that I should write to you fables and imaginations, but I do not so, I have written as it have been informed me, and will do: it was told me that both Daubeney and Berney were dead; but for certain Daubeney is dead, God assoil his soul! whereof I am right sorry, and it had pleased God that it might have been otherwise.

Remember you, ye have had two great losses within this twelvemonth of him and of Sir Thomas. God visiteth you as it pleaseth him in sundry wises: he would ye should know him and serve him better than ye have done before this time, and then he will send you the more grace to do well in all other things; and for God's love remember it right well, and take it patiently, and thank God of his visitation; and if anything have been amiss, any otherwise than it ought to have

been before this, either in pride, or in lavish expenses, or in any other thing that have offended God, amend it, and pray him of his grace and help, and intend well to God and to your neighbours; and though your power hereafter be to acquit [*requite*] them of their malice, yet be merciful to them, and God shall send you the more grace to have your intent in other things. I remember these clauses because of the last letter that ye sent me. I have sent to Harry Halman, of Sporle, to help to get as ye desired me, and he cannot get past five or eight at the most, and yet it will not be but if (*unless*) he come that [*they*] ye trust upon that should come, for they long (*belong*) apart to him; and Richard Sharman hath assayed on his part, and he cannot get past five; for those that long to us, they long also to our adversaries, and they have been desired by them, and they would nought do for them, and therefore they think to have magery (*q. management*)[1] of the other part.

As for the gentleman that ye desired me to speak with, I spake with his wife, and she told me he was not in this country nor nought wist when he should be here; and as for the other man, he has bought him a livery[2] in Bromholm priory, and have given up the world, &c.

Item, as for money I could get but ten pounds upon pledges, and that is spent for your matters here, for paying of your men that were at Caister, and other things, and I wot not where to get none, neither for surety nor for pledges; and as for mine own livelihood, I am so simply paid thereof that I fear me I shall be fain to borrow for myself or else to break up household; or both.

As for the yielding of the place at Caister, I trow Writtill hath told of the pawntements (*appointments*) how it is delivered. I would that had been so ere this time, and then there should not have been done so mickle hurt as there is in divers ways, for many of our well-willers are put to loss for our sakes, and I fear me it shall be long ere it be recompensed again, and that shall cause others to do the less for us hereafter.

I would ye should (*send*) your brother word, and some other that ye trust, to see to your own livelihood to set it in a rule, and to gather thereof that may be had in haste; and also of Sir John Fastolf's livelihood that may be gathered in peaceable wise, for as for Richard Calle he will no more gather it but if (*unless*) ye command him, and he would fain make his account, and have your good mastership, as it is told me, and deliver the evidence of Beckham and all other things that longeth to you, that he trusteth that ye will be his good master hereafter; and he saith he will not take none new master till ye refuse his service.

Remember that your livelihood may be set in such a rule that ye may know how it is, and what is owen to you, for by my faith I have holpen as much as I may and more, saving myself, and therefore take heed ere it be worse.

This letter was begun on Friday was sev'nnight, and ended this day next after Michaelmas day. God keep you, and give you grace to do as well as I would ye did, and I charge you beware that ye set no land to mortgage, for if any advise you thereto they are not your friends; beware betimes mine advice, &c.: I trow your brother will give you tidings in haste.

MARGARET PASTON.

Begun Friday, 22nd of September,
ended Saturday, 30th September,
1469. 9 E. IV.

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[1] [We do not know the word *magery*, but it seems used in the sense of neutrality—the services of the tenantry are claimed by both parties, and having refused to do aught for the one part, they think it right to hold a neutrality as to the other part.]

[2] It was usual in these times for persons growing into years to procure by purchase or gift a retreat in some religious society, where, giving up all concern in worldly matters, they passed the remainder of their time in prayer and confession: some did it to finish a pure and unspotted life in a place set apart for religion, where they should be free from every worldly engagement; others undertook it as an atonement for their former evil deeds, with a hope that it might insure their eternal welfare.

LETTER CCLXXXV. (CXVII. vol. iv. p. 405.)

This is the only letter written to the besiegers which appears in this collection, and the writer of this cannot be ascertained: he seems however to be a well-wisher to the Pastons by what he says in his letter of the opinion of the lords on this business, who likewise appear favourable to them. He seems to hint that the extremity to which things are carried is more the fault of these captains to whom the letter is addressed than that of the Duke of Norfolk, who "is noted so well disposed."

(To) Sir John Hevengham[1] *Thomas Wingfield*,[2] *Gilbert Debenham*,[3] *William Brandon*,[4] *and every of them severally in others absence.*

It is so that, according to such direction as was moved to be desired of my lords being here as for such as here be, they marvel greatly thereof, thinking and remembering in themselves that such offer as was made by my credence to my lord, and tofore you reported, should have sounded more to his pleasure and honour than this his desire; nevertheless my lords think, whereas they wrote and desired jointly that such credence, as ye remember, might be observed and taken, and by you refused; now if they should assent to the desire of this direction, it is thought in them not so to do, for it is so fortuned that divers of my lords, from whom I brought both writing and credence, be at the king's high commandment hastily departed unto his highness; trusting in God to have hearing in brief time of their hasty again coming, at which time my lords that here be, and they that shall come again, shall commune and speak together of this desire and direction, and such answer as they give and make shall be sent unto you then with haste possible. Over this me thinketh for your excuse of burden and charge, such as I hear will be laid unto you concerning the great works that daily be and are at the manor of Caister, if ye think that God should have pleasure, and also the king our sovereign lord, and that my said lords should think in you good advice or sad, and that ye intended to avoid the shedding of Christian blood and the destruction of the king's liege people, that at your politic labour and wisdom ye might bring my lord to the abstinence of war, and a truce to be had and continued unto time of the return of my said lords, or else knowledge of their intent; certifying you for truth that there be messengers sent unto my said lords with letters of such answer as I had of you and your desire together, knowing certainly that there shall be hasty relation of their intents in the premises; which answers ye shall have at furthest by Monday cometh sev'nnight. Furthermore letting you weet that I understand for certain that my lords that be here eschew, for such inconvenience that might fall, to conclude any answer by themselves, considering that my credence was given by all the lords, praying you, as shall be done to the continuance of this truce aforesaid, that I may be ascertained; or if at this hour ye could yet think my credence reasonable and honourable to be accepted and taken, send me word in writing from you by my servant, bringer of this, all delays laid apart; for I ascertain [*assure*] you as he that owe you service, I was and yet am greatly blamed for my long tarrying with you, for divers of my lords tarried here for me, by the assent of all my lords, longer than they would have done, to know my answer and guiding from you; and over this I certify you that ye cannot make my lords here to think that if there be inconvenience or mischief, murder or manslaughter, had or done, but and *(if)* your wills and intents were to the contrary, my lord is noted so well disposed, that without your great abetment he neither will do nor assent to none such thing; praying you, therefore, as your friend, to remember well

[1] Sir John Heveningham, knight and baunoret, was a descendant of an ancient family situated at the towns of Heveningham, in Suffolk; his son Thomas became owner of the estate at Ketteringham, in Norfolk, where this family continued for several generations.

[2] Sir Thomas Wingfield was a younger son either of Sir Robert or Sir John Wingfield, of Letheringham, in Suffolk.

[3] Sir Gilbert Debenham, knight, was descended of an ancient family in the county of Suffolk.

[4] Sir William Brandon married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Robert Wingfield, and was ancestor to Charles Brandon, afterwards Duke of Suffolk.

yourself, and so to rule you as my lords may have in time to come knowledge of your more sad (*grave*) disposition than as yet I feel they think in you; and how that my lords note some of you, James Hobart, being of my lord's counsel, can inform you, wherefore for God's sake remember you, and deliver my servant, and if ye think my first credence or this advertisement shall be taken to effect, then I pray you that my servant, bringer hereof, may have sure conduct to speak with John Paston, and to report to him these directions, and upon that to deliver him a bill certifying the same.

London,
September, 1469.
9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXXXVI.—(XXVIII. vol. ii. p. 25.)

This letter is endorsed in an ancient hand. "The Duke of Norff' Lr'e upon his entrie into Caister A° E. 4. ix°." This is given to show the regal style used by the nobility of these times. In Blomefield's 'History of Norfolk,' vol. v. p. 1552, a particular account of the siege of Caister Castle is given, with the names of the principal persons engaged on both sides. The mark of the signet remains, but the impression is defaced. It is likewise signed with the Duke's own hand.

THE DUKE OF NORFOLK.

WHERE(AS) John Paston, Esquire, and other diverse persons have, against the peace, kept the manor of Caister with force, against the will and intent of us the Duke of Norfolk to our great displeasure; which notwithstanding, at the contemplation of the writing of the most worshipful and reverend father in God the Cardinal of England, and our most trusty and entirely-beloved uncle the Archbishop of Canterbury, the right noble prince my Lord of Clarence, and other lords of our blood, and also at the great labour and instance of our most dear and singular-beloved wife, we be agreed that the said John Paston, and his said fellowship, being in the said manor, shall depart and go out of the said manor without delay, and make thereof deliverance to such persons as we will assign, the said fellowship having their lives and goods, horse and harness, and other goods being in the keeping of the said John Paston; except guns, cross-bows, and quarrels, and all other hostlements (*warlike implements*) to the said manor annexed and belonging; and to have fifteen days respite after their said departing out to go into what place shall like them, without any actions or quarrel to be taken or made by us or in our name to them or any of them, within our franchise or without, during the said time.

Given under our signet at Yarmouth the 26th day of September, the 9th year of King Edward the IVth.

NORFOLK.

Yarmouth,
Tuesday, 26th of September,
1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXXXVII.—(XCVIII. vol. iv. p. 411.)

Caister yielded. J. P.

On reading this letter no one can withhold the praise due to John Paston as a brave soldier and a kind and generous master, and at the same time wishing that he and his companions had been able to have kept possession of Caister: the noble manner in which he speaks of his companions interests us both in his and their favour; these are the same four soldiers that his brother Sir John had so particularly recommended to him in his letter dated November 9, 1468.

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you; and as for the certainty of the deliverance of Caister, John Chapman can tell you how that we were enforced thereto as well as

myself; as for John Chapman and his three fellows I have purveyed that they be paid each of them forty shillings with the money that they had of you and Daubeney; and that is enough for the season that they have done you service; I pray you give them their thank, for by my troth they have as well deserved it as any men that ever bore life; but as for money ye need not to give them without ye will, for they be pleased with their wages.

Wryttill promised me to send you the certainty of the appointment, we were for lack of victuals, gunpowder, men's hearts, lack of surety of rescue, driven thereto to take appointment.[1]

If ye will that I come to you send me word and I shall purvey me for to tarry with you a two or three days; by my troth the rewarding of such folks as hath been with me during the siege, hath put me in great danger for the money; God preserve you, and I pray you be of good cheer till I speak with you, and I trust to God to ease your heart in some things.

JOHN PASTON.

September, 1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXXXVIII.—(XCIX. vol. iv. p. 413.)

The advice given to Sir John Paston by his brother relative to his servants, who had faithfully served him during the siege, &c. shows the goodness of his heart, and interests the reader in wishing that he had been of ability to have retained them himself. It seems odd that a man who had so lately commanded a garrison against the forces of the Duke of Norfolk, should, so immediately after the surrender of the place, have any thoughts of engaging himself in his grace's service, as it fully appears by this letter that J. Paston had. We learn from it, however, that, in disputes of this kind, whenever the cause of dispute was ended all animosity ceased, and the different parties forgot they had so lately been enemies. We find a great deal of similar behaviour between the partisans of the White and Red Rose during the civil wars of this distant period. [This is true, but very contradictory of Sir J. Fenn's opinions expressed in other places.]

To my master, Sir John Paston, in Fleet-street.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend (*me*) unto you; praying you that ye will in all haste send me word how that ye will that Sir John Styll, John Pampyng, William Milisent, Nicholas Maudent, (*and*) T. Tomson shall be ruled, and whether that they shall seek them new services or not; and Matthew Bedford also, for he hath been with me this season, and is from my mother; and if so be that ye will have these to abide with you, or any of them, send word which that they be, for betwixt this and Hallowmas my mother is agreed that they shall have meat and drink of her for such a certain weekly as my mother and ye and I can accord when we meet, notwithstanding if ye could get Berney, or any of these said fellows which that ye will not keep, any service in the mean season, it were more worship for you than to put them from you like masterless hounds, for by my troth they are as good men's bodies as any alive, and specially Sir John Still and John Pampyng; and (*if*) I were of power to keep them and all these before rehearsed, by troth they should never depart from me while I lived.

If ye send me word that I shall come to you to London for to commune with you of any matter, so God help me, I have neither money to come up with nor for to tarry with you when I am there, but if (*unless*) ye send me some; for by my troth these works have caused me to lay out for you better than ten or twelve pounds, besides

[1] [The original has—" we wer sor (with a long *s*, probably a typographical error) lak of vetayl gonepoudyr menys herts lak of suerte of rescwe dreuyn therto to take apoyntement." Fenn translates it thus: "we were sore lack of victuals (*and*) gunpowder, men's hearts lack of surety of rescue (*were*), driven thereto to take appointment." Two words are here driven in, and the sentence is made nonsense. With the correction of *sor* into *for* we think the meaning is quite clear. Lack of men's hearts means, that the hearts of the men, having done all they could, had at length given way—they were no longer manly.]

that money that I had of my mother, which is about an eight pound; God amend defaults, but this I warrant you, without that it be Matthew which ye sent word by John Thresher that ye would have to await on you, there is no man that was hired for the time of this siege that will ask you a penny.

Also, I pray you send down a commandment to Stutevylle, or to some auditor, to take accounts of Daubeney's bills, for his executors are sore called upon for to administer by the bishop, or else he saith that he will sequester; Daubeney set in his debts that ye owed him twelve pounds and ten shillings; whether it be so or not his bills of his own hands will not lie, for he made his bills clear or then (*before*) the siege came about us. As for the evidence of Beckham, my mother sent to Calle for them, and he sent her word that he would make his accounts and deliver the evidence and all together.

My mother hath sent to him again for them this day; if she speed they shall be sent to you in all haste, or else and (*if*) ye send for me I shall bring them with me. Send my mother and me word who ye will that (*shall*) have the rule of your livelihood here in this country, and in what form that it shall be dealt with. I will not make me masterfast with my Lord of Norfolk nor with none other till I speak with you; and ye think it be to be done get me a master.

Deal courteously with the queen and that fellowship, and with mistress Anne Hawte for wappys[1] till I speak with you. Written on St. Faith's even.

JOHN PASTON.

By Saint George I and my fellowship stand in fear of my Lord of Norfolk's men, for we be threatened sore, notwithstanding the safeguards that my fellowship have; as for me I have none, nor none of your household men, nor none will have; it were shame[2] to take it.

Thursday, 5 October,
1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCLXXXIX.—(C. vol. iv. p. 417.)

Two men having been killed during the siege at Caister, the Duke of Norfolk's counsel instigate their widows to lodge an appeal for the murder against John Paston and others. An appeal is an accusation of a murderer by a person who had interest in the person killed, as the wife had interest in the life of her husband, and must be brought within a year and day after the fact committed; and in this appeal of death the king cannot pardon the defendant. The latter part of this letter contains Latin, French, and English, by which we may judge how liberally J. Paston had been educated. He seems likewise in good spirits though threatened with this appeal. [The appeal in cases of murder is now abolished.]

To Master Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, &c.; it is so that this day there came a good fellow to me which may not be discovered, and let me weet that my Lord of Norfolk's counsel hath this Christmas gotten the two widows, whose husbands were slain at the siege of Caister, and have them bounden in a great sum that they shall sue an appeal against me and such as were there with me within the place, and they be bound also that they shall release no man within the appeal named till such time as my Lord of Norfolk will license them.

Item, the cause is this, as it is told me by divers, that ye make no more suit to my lord for yourself than ye do, and therefore they do the worse to me for your sake.

Item, as for my coming up to London, so God help me, and (*if*) I may choose I come not there for, argent me faut, without an appeal or an inkyr (*q. inquiry*) of some special matters of yours cause it. Item, I pray you remember Calais, for I am put out of wages in this country.

Item, I pray you send me some tidings how the world goeth ad confortandum stomachum.

[1] This expression "for wappys" I do not understand.

[2] J. Paston's honour and courage are apparent from his thinking a safeguard shameful.

Item, ye must purvey a new attorney in this country as for me, for our matters and clamour is too great and our purse and wit too slender; but I will rub on as long as I may both with mine own and other means that will do for me till better peace be. Written this Saturday at Norwich.

JOHN PASTON.

Saturday,
December or January, 1469. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCXC.—(CI. vol. iv. p. 421.)

As this letter contains a variety of matter I have given it to the reader. The bargain with the archbishop was I suppose relative to the expenses attending the probate of the will, &c. It seems extraordinary that the Norfolk family should speak favourably of J. Paston, and yet pursue the appeal against him for murder. His device to interrupt the keeping of the court at Saxthorp deserves notice, and shows the plain dealing of the times.

To my right worshipful brother, Sir John Paston, Knight, be this delivered.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you in my best wise. Liketh it you to weet that I have this day delivered your mantle, your ray gown,[1] and your cross-bows with telers and windlass, and your Normandy bill, to Kerby, to bring with him to London.

Item, in any wise and (*if*) ye can, ask the probate of my father's will to be given you with the bargain that ye make with my Lord of Canterbury, and I can think that ye may have it; and as soon as it is proved ye or I may have a letter of administration upon the same, and an acquittance of my lord cardinal even forthwith; and this were one of the best bargains that ye made this two year I assure you; and he may make you acquittance, or get you one of the Bishop of Winchester for Sir John Fastolf's goods also, and in my reason this were light to be brought about with the same bargain; and (*if*) ye purpose to bargain with him ye had need to hie you, for it is told me that my Lord of Norfolk will enter into it hastily, and if he so do it is the worse for you, and it will cause them to proffer the less silver.

Item, I pray you send me some secret tidings of the likelihood of the world by the next messenger that cometh between, that I may be either merrier or else more sorry than I am, and also that I may guide me thereafter.

Item, as for Sir Robert Wingfield, I can get no ten pounds of him, but he saith that I shall have the fairest harness that I can buy in London for silver, but money can I none get.

I cannot yet make my peace with my Lord of Norfolk nor my lady by no means, yet every man telleth me that my lady saith passingly well of me always; notwithstanding I trow that they will sue the appeal this term, yet there is no man of us indicted, but if (*unless*) it were done afore the coroners ere then we came out of the place; there is now but three men in it, and the bridges always drawn. No more, but God lät you mine her.[2] Written the Tuesday next after Saint Agnes the first.[3]

JOHN PASTON.

Item, yesterday W. Gornay entered into Saxthorp, and there was he keeping of a court, and had the tenants attorned to him; but ere the court was all done I came thither with a man with me and no more, and there, before him and all his fellowship, Gayne, Bomsted, &c. I charged the tenants that they should proceed no further in their court upon pain that might fall of it; and they letted for a season, but they saw that I was not able to make my party good, and so they proceeded

[1] This means a gown made of cloth that was never either coloured or dyed.

[2] This sentence I wish to have explained.

[3] The festival of St. Agnes the first (and the most noted of the two), was kept on the 21st of January; her second festival was on the 28th of the same month, which it is to be observed was not the octave of the former, but a distinct feast upon a different occasion, and it is sometimes written "Agnetis Nativitas;" but it was on account of a miracle wrought at her tomb that this second feast was instituted.

further: I saw that, and sat me down by the steward, and blotted his book with my finger as he wrote, so that all the tenants affirmed that the court was interrupted by me as in your right, and I requested them to record that there was no peaceable court kept, and so they said they would.

Tuesday,
23 January, 1469—70. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCXCI.—(CII. vol. iv. p. 425.)

This letter shows the means that were laboured by the enemies of the Pastons to prosecute this appeal.

To John Paston, Esq., be this delivered.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine; letting you weet that the woman that sueth the appeal[1] against your brother and his men is come to London to call thereupon, and when that she should come to London there was delivered her an hundred shillings for to sue with, so that, by that I hear in this country, she will not leave it, but that she shall call thereupon (*at*) such time as shall be to your most rebuke but if (*unless*) ye lay the better watch; she hath evil counsel, and that will see you greatly uttered (*outed or displayed*), and that ye may understand by the money that was taken her (*given her*) when she came up, and ye should find it, I know it well, if they might have you at advantage; therefore for God's sake make diligent search by the advice of your counsel, that there be no negligence in you in this matter nor other for default of labour, and call upon your brother, and tell him that I send him God's blessing and mine, and desire him that he will now awhile, while he hath the lords at his intent, that he seek the means to make an end of his matters, for his enemies are greatly couraged now of late; what is the cause I know not.

Also I pray you speak to Playters that there may be found a mean that the sheriff or the gatherer of the green-wax[2] may be discharged of certain issues that ran up on Fastolf for Maryot's matter, for the bailiff was at him this week, and should have distrained him, but that he promised him that he should within this eight days labour the means that he should be discharged, or else he must content him, &c.

Also I send you by the bearer hereof closed in this letter, five shillings of gold, and pray you to buy me a sugar-loaf, and dates, and almonds, and send it me home, and if ye beware (*lay out*) any more money, when ye come home I shall pay it you again; the Holy Ghost keep you both, and deliver you of your enemies. Written on Saint Agas (*Agatha's*) day in haste.

Item, I pray you speak to Master Roger for my syrup;[3] for I had never more need thereof, and send it me as hastily as ye can.

By
MARGARET PASTON.

Monday,
5th of February, 1469-70. 9 E. IV.

LETTER CCXCII.—(XXIX. vol. ii. p. 27.)

John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, retaining his loyalty to the House of Lancaster, in whose cause his father and elder brother had lost their heads upon the scaffold in 1461-2, and for whose sake he himself had suffered a long imprisonment, seems now privately to be preparing to join the Earl of Warwick in favour of the deposed King Henry. I should suppose this letter to have been written either in July, 1469, at the time

[1] [Two men were killed of the Duke of Norfolk's party; and the finding of the coroner's inquest, though asserted to be invalid, was unfavourable to the Pastons. But we hear of no trial preceding the appeals or appeal, for though appeals are talked of, there appears to have been actually but one.]

[2] Estreats delivered to the sheriff out of the Exchequer, to be levied in his county under the seal of that court, made in green wax, were from thence called green-wax.

[3] [Master Roger was, I suppose, some leech, famous for his syrups, &c.]

that the Earl of Warwick and his adherents were meditating the plan for dethroning Edward, or in 1470, when they had come to a resolution of reinstating Henry on the throne. The order to Sir John Paston, for providing the horse-harness, was to be executed, "*as it were for himself*," and the referring him to the Countess for money, shows it to be at a time when his finances were very low. The expression "*Yet she must borrow it*," implies too that his lady had not already the money, but that she had it *still* to procure. Though the Earl desired that his horse-harness might be of the same price with one which Lord Hastings had purchased, yet he wished it not to be like his; the reason seems to be, he did not choose to appear with caparisons similar to those of a Yorkist. The words "I trust to God we shall do right well" refer to some scheme then in agitation; and on the success of which he had placed great confidence.

To Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful, and my especial true-hearted friend, I commend me unto you, praying you to ordain (*order for*) me three horses' harness as goodly as ye and Genyns can devise as it were for yourself; and that I may have them in all haste order; also Skern saith ye would ordain two standard staves; this I pray you to remember, and my wife shall deliver you silver, and yet she must borrow it. Six or seven pounds I would bestow on a horse-harness; and so Skern told me I might have. The Lord Hastings had for the same price, but I would not mine were like his: and I trust to God we shall do right well, who preserve you. Written at Canterbury in haste, the 18th day of July.

OXYNFORD.

Canterbury, 18th of July, 1469 or 1470. 9 or 10 E. IV.

LETTER CCXCIII.—(XXX. vol. ii. p. 29.)

This letter was written in February or March 1469, 1470, or 1471, for in these years civil dissentions were on foot. The caution respecting tidings, and the uncertainty of what may befall, shows that this letter was written during some convulsion of the state. By the Earl of Warwick's being supposed to go with the king into Lincolnshire, it appears as if this letter was written during the restoration of Henry VI., and that their going there was to oppose Edward's return.

To John Paston, Esquire, being at Norwich, be this letter delivered.

I COMMEND me to you, letting you weet, &c. (*Here follows an account of bills, and receipts, &c. of no consequence.*)

Item, as for Mistress Katherine Dudley I have many times recommended you to her, and she is nothing displeased with it; she rekkythe not how many gentlemen love her, she is full of love; I have betyn (*enforced*) the matter for you, your unknowledge (*without your knowledge*) as I told her; she answered me that she would (*have*) no one this two years, and I believe her: for I think she hath the life that she can hold her content with. I trow she will be a sore labouring woman this two years for the meed of her soul.

And Mistress Gryseacress is sure to Selenger (*St. Leger*), with my Lady of Exeter, [1] a foul loss.

Item, I pray you speak with Harcourt [2] of the abbey, for a little clock, which I sent him by James Gresham to mend, and that ye would get it of him, and (*if*) it be ready, and send it me; and as for money for his labour, he hath another clock of mine, which Sir Thomas Lyndes, God have his soul! gave me; he may keep that till I pay him; this clock is my lord archbishop's, but let not him weet of it, and that it (*be*) easily carried hither by your advice.

Also as for oranges I shall send you a serteyn by the next carrier, and as for tidings the bearer hereof shall inform you; ye must give credence to him.

[1] Anne, daughter of Richard Duke of York, and sister of King Edward IV., married Henry Holland, Duke of Exeter, and in 1462 had possession of his forfeited estates, and remained with her brother, Edward IV. She afterwards married Sir Thomas St. Leger, and died in 1475.

[2] This shows that our curious mechanical arts were practised in the religious houses, and performed there by the monks, &c. for money.

As for my good speed, I hope well, I am offered yet to have Mistress Anne Hawte, and I shall have help enough as some say.

(*Here follows an account of some disputes between Sir William Yelverton, and Sir John Paston, his uncle William, &c., of no consequence.*)

Item, it is so that I am half in purpose to come home within a month hereafter, or about Midlent, or before Easter, under your correction, if so be that ye deem that my mother would help me to my costs, ten marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) or thereabouts. I pray you feel her disposition and send me word.

Item, I cannot tell you what will fall of the world, for the king verily is disposed to go into Lincolnshire, and men wot not what will fall thereof, nor thereafter, they ween my Lord of Norfolk shall bring 10,000 men.

Item, there is come a new little Turk, which is a well-visaged fellow of the age of forty years; and he is lower than Manuel by an handful, and lower than my little Tom by the shoulders, and more little above his pap; and he hath, as he said to the king himself, three or four children, (*sons*) each one of them as high and as likely as the king himself; and he is legged right enough.

Item, I pray you show, or read to my mother, such things as ye think are for her to know after your discretion; and to let her understand of the article of the treaty between Sir William Yelverton and me.

Item, my Lord of Warwick, as it is supposed, shall go with the king into Lincolnshire; some men say that his going shall do good, and some say that it doth harm.

I pray you ever have an eye to Caister, to know the rule there, and send me word, and whether my wise lord and my lady be yet as sotted upon it (*as fond of it*)[1] as they were; and whether my said lord resorteth thither as often as he did or not; and of the disposition of the country.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

LETTER CCXCIV.—(XXXI. vol. ii. p. 35.)

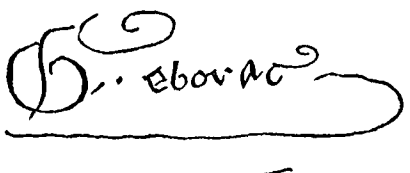
This letter, from George Nevile, Archbishop of York, and brother to Richard Earl of Warwick, must have been written either when he was in opposition to Edward in conjunction with his brother the Earl of Warwick, or after his return from his imprisonment abroad not long before his death, when it is probable he found it difficult to raise even a small sum of money. George Nevile was consecrated Bishop of Exeter in 1455, when he was not completely twenty years of age. In 1460 he was appointed Lord Chancellor, and in 1466 advanced to the Archbishopric of York. In 1470 he had the custody of Edward IV. when taken prisoner by the Earl of Warwick, and died in 1476, æt. 41.

To my right trusty and well-beloved Sir John Paston.

IHS.

RIGHT trusty and well beloved, I greet you heartily well, and send you by Thomas your child 20*l.* praying you to spare me as for any more at this time, and to hold you content with the same, as my singular trust is in you; and I shall within brief time ordain and purvey for you such as shall be unto your pleasure with the grace of Almighty God, who have you in his protection and keeping.

Written in the manor of the Moor,[2] the 7th day of May. G. EBORAC.



The Moor, in Hertfordshire,
7th of May. Between 1466 and 1476,
6 and 16 E. IV.

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1 [*Besotted* upon or about it.]

2 In Hertfordshire, a seat of the Archbishop's.

LETTER CCXCV.—(XXXII. vol. ii. p. 37.)

This letter was written a short time after the battle of Stamford, wherein Edward was victorious, having slain and dispersed the forces commanded by Sir Robert Welles, who in this engagement had fought most furiously; being exasperated at the recent death of his father the Lord Welles. We are here acquainted with the movements of the king after his victory, and with some of the executions which took place by his order on those who had opposed him. [After the quarrel of Edward IV. with Warwick his rule became much more severe and sanguinary than it had been. A proof that the previous moderation was owing, as it is usually asserted, to the counsels of Warwick.]

To my cousin, John Paston.

THE king came to Grantham, and there tarried Thursday[1] all day, and there was headed Sir Thomas Delalaunde and one John Neille, a great captain; and upon the Monday[2] next after that at Doncaster, and there was headed Sir Robert Welles and another great captain; and then the king had word that the Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Warwick was at Easterfield,[3] twenty miles from Doncaster; and upon the Tuesday,[4] at nine of the bell, the king took the field, and mustered his people; and it was said, that (*there*) were never seen in England so many goodly men and so well arrayed in a field; and my lord[5] was worshipfully accompanied, no lord there so well; wherefore the king gave my lord a great thank.

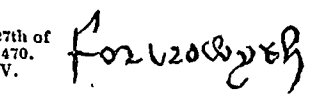
And than (*when*) the Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Warwick heard that the king was coming to themward, incontinent (*immediately*) they departed, and went to Manchester in Lancashire, hoping to have had help and succour of the Lord Stanley;[6] but in conclusion there they had little favour, as it was informed the king; and so men say they went westward, and some men deem to London.

And when the king heard they were departed and gone, he went to York, and came thither the Thursday[7] next after, and there came into him all the gentlemen of the shire; and upon our Lady-day[8] (*he*) made Percy Earl of Northumberland, and he that was earl[9] afore Marquis Montague; and so the king is purposed to come southward; God send him good speed.

Written the 27th day of March.

FOR TRUTH.[10]

Tuesday, 27th of March, 1470. 10 E. IV.



[1] 15th March, 1469.
[2] 19th March, 1469.
[3] [Probably Austerfield; but this is not half the distance here stated from Doncaster.]
[4] 20th March, 1469.
[5] John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.
[6] Thomas Lord Stanley, afterwards Earl of Derby.
[7] 22nd March, 1469.
[8] 25th March, 1470. N. B. The date changed on the 25th of March, yearly.
[9] John Nevile, brother to the Earl of Warwick; by this advancement in honour we must suppose that the king had no suspicion of the loyalty of the marquis. I have been more particular in ascertaining the dates of the occurrences in this letter, as they differ from some of those in our historians.
[10] The name of the writer is not put to this letter, but at the end, in a hand of the time, though in a different one from that used in the letter, is written "for trowyth."

LETTER CCXCVI.—(CIII. vol. iv. p. 429.)

I have given this letter as not only containing a case of law, but to show the steps taken by the Duke of Norfolk's counsel to harass and distress Sir John Paston and his party for the death of two men who, I presume, were shot by those in the place during the siege of Caister. It appears from this and some other letters in this collection, that the Townshend therein mentioned was a lawyer. It is therefore most probable that the person was Roger Townshend, of Lincoln's Inn, afterwards a serjeant-at-law, and by Richard III. appointed one of the judges of the Common Pleas, in which important office he was continued by Henry VII. and knighted. His second son John (the issue of the elder being extinct) was ancestor to the present most noble the Marquis Townshend, of Raiuham, in Norfolk.

To Sir John Paston, Knight, or to Thomas Stomps, to deliver to the said Sir John.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, and my special good brother, I recommend me to you; and forasmuch as I cannot send you good tidings ye shall have such as I know.

It is so, that on Wednesday last past ye and I, Pampyng, and Edmund Broom were indicted of felony at the sessions here in Norwich, for shooting off a gun at Caister, in August last past, which gun slew two men, I Pampyng, and Broom as principal, and ye as accessary, notwithstanding Townshend and Lomner hold an opinion that the verdict is void, for there were two of the inquest that would not agree to the indictment, and inasmuch as they two were agreed in other matters and not in that, and that they two were not discharged from the remnant at such time as that verdict of your indictment was given, their opinion is that all the verdict is void, as well of all other matters as of yours; whether their opinion be good or not I cannot determine, nor themselves neither.

I pray you let not this matter be slept, for I can think that my Lord of Norfolk's counsel will cause the widows to take an appeal, and to remove it up into the King's Bench at the beginning of this term; Townshend hath promised me that he shall be at London on Tuesday next coming, and then ye may commune with him in that matter, and take his advice.

Item, Townshend and Lomner think that and (*if*) ye have good counsel, ye may justify the keeping of the place for the peaceable possession that ye have had in it more than three year; but in conclusion, all this is done for nought else but for to enforce you to take a direction with my Lord of Norfolk.

I understood by R. Southwell, for he and I communed in this matter right largely betwixt him and me, insomuch he telleth me that and (*if*) I be at London in the week next after St. Peter, at which time he shall be there himself, he saith that my lady hath promised me her good ladyship, and sent me word by him, inasmuch as he spake for me to her, that she would remember mine old service, and forget the great displeasure, in such wise that I shall understand that the suit that I have made to my lord, her husband, and her, shall turn to your advantage and mine more than we ween as yet or shall understand till such time as I have spoken with her good grace; and upon this promise I have promised Southwell to meet with him at London that same week next after St. Peter; wherefore I would passingly fain that ye were in London at that season, or nigh about London, so that I might understand at your place where that I might speak with you or them (*before*) [1] I speak with my lady.

I purpose to go to Canterbury [2] on foot this next week with God's grace, and so to come to London from thence.

I pray you see that I be safe for Parker's and Harry Collett's matter.

Southwell [3] told me this, that if so be that ye will yourself, ye shall have both good lordship and ladyship, and money, or lands, or both, and all your matters set clear; what that he meaneth I cannot say.

As for all other matters in this country, I shall do as well as I may for fault (*default*) of money till I speak with you: I have many collars on as I shall tell you when I come.

No more, but God preserve you and yours; written at Norwich, Friday next after Corpus Christi day.

JOHN PASTON.

I did as much as I could to have let (*hindered*) the indictments, but it would not be, as I shall inform you, and Townshend knoweth the same.

Norwich,
Friday, 22nd of June, 1470.
10 E. IV.

[1] [In the original—*or then I spek, &c.*—which is clearly *ere then I speak, &c.*]

[2] On pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas Becket, I suppose.

[3] Richard Southwell, Esq., of Wood-Rising; he acquired this estate by marrying Amy, daughter and co-heir of Sir Edmund Wichingham, knight.

LETTER CCXCVII.—(CIV. vol. iv. p. 435.)

The former part of this letter gives us the same information as we received from the last, and would not have been inserted, had I not thought the account of the proceedings relative to the levying the fine worthy of notice. The being able to produce the copy of the fine shows the propriety of Margaret Paston's cautions to Sir John, respecting the great care which he ought to take of his deeds and writings.

To Sir John Paston, Knight, or to Thomas Stomps, to deliver to the said Sir John.

As I sent you word, by a letter that John Wymondham brought to London, J. Pampyng is indicted of felony, and Edmund Broom, as principals, and ye as accessary, for shooting off a gun in August last past, which gun killed two men, and I trow that my Lord of Norfolk's counsel will make one of the widows or both to sue an appeal upon the same indictment this term, wherefore I pray you see well to this matter, that when it is certified into the King's Bench, Broom and Pampyng may have warning that they may purvey for themselves if there come any capias out for them; Townshend can tell you all the matter.

Also, ye must in any wise beware, for my grandam,[1] and mine Lady Anne,[2] and mine uncle William, shall be at London within these eight or ten days; and I wot well it is for nought else but to make mine uncle William sure of her land, notwithstanding she hath reared (*levied*) a fine of it before Goodred,[3] the justice, in my grandfather's days; and my mother telleth me that ye have the copy of the same fine, I would advise you to have it ready whatsoever betide; I trow they will be the more busy about the same matter, because they think that ye dare not come in London nor at Westminster to let them, but if so be that ye have not the copy of the same fine, look that ye spare for no cost to do (*make*) search for it, for it will stand you on hand I feel by the working.

This day sev'nnight I trust to God to be forward to Canterbury at the farthest, and upon Saturday come sev'nnight I trust to be in London, wherefore I pray you leave word at your place in Fleet-street where I shall find you, for I purpose not to be seen in London till I have spoken with you.

I pray you remember these matters, for all is done to make you to draw to an end with these lords that have your land from you. No more, but I pray God send you your heart's desire in these matters and in all others. Written at Norwich, the Monday next after St. John Baptist.

JOHN PASTON.

Norwich, Monday, 25th of June,
1470. 10 E. IV.

LETTER CCXCVIII.—(XXXIII. vol. ii. p. 41.)

These letters of King Edward were copied, and the copies appear to have been sent inclosed immediately to the person to whom the letter containing them was directed. The letters were written by the king in 1470, either immediately before he was taken prisoner by the Earl of Warwick, or soon after his escape and reassuming the government, when a conference was held at Westminster under a safe conduct; or (which is most probable) they were written at the time that the king had ordered his forces to rendezvous at Nottingham, in order to oppose Warwick; when, on the earl's approach, he retreated, and marched for Lynn, in Norfolk, from whence he embarked for Holland. The date will not coincide with the time as fixed by our historians. The letters are short and concise, but contain everything the writer intended, and, as royal letters, are certainly curious. The signature at the top is copied from an autograph of King Edward.

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[1] Agnes, widow of Sir W. Paston, the judge.

[2] Anne, daughter of Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, married William Paston, the uncle of Sir John Paston.

[3] William Goodrede was created a serjeant-at law in 1425, in 1431 he was appointed king's serjeant, and in 1424 became a justice of the King's Bench.

These three letters underwritten, the king of his own hand wrote unto my Lords of Clarence, Warwick, and Archbishop of York. The credence whereof in substance was, that every of them should in such peaceable wise, as they have be (*been*) accustomed to ride, come unto his highness.

Rex Edwardus, to our brother of Clarence.

BROTHER, we pray you to give faith and credence to our well-beloved Sir Thomas Montgomery[1] and Morice Berkley[2] in that on our behalf they shall declare to you; and we trust ye will dispose you according to our pleasure and commandment; and ye shall be to us right welcome. At Nottingham the 9th day of July.

To our cousin the Earl of Warwick.

COUSIN, we greet you well, and pray you to give faith and credence to Sir Thomas Montgomery and Morice Berkley (in that on our behalf they shall declare to you); and we ne trust (*do not believe*) that ye should be of any such disposition towards us, as the rumour here runneth, considering the trust and affection we bear in you. At Nottingham the 9th day of July. And cousin ne (*do not*) think but ye shall be to us welcome.

To our cousin the Archbishop of York.

COUSIN, we pray you that ye will, according to the promise ye made us, come to us as soon as ye goodly may; and that (*ye*) give credence to Sir Thomas Montgomery and Morice Berkley in that on our behalf they shall say to you; and ye shall be to us welcome. At Nottingham the 9th day of July.

Nottingham,
9th of July, 1470. 10 E. IV.

LETTER CCXCIX.—(XXXIV. vol. ii. p. 43.)

Under the direction of this letter is written in a hand of the time "A° x°," which, I suppose, means the 10 E. IV., and accordingly I have so dated this letter, though, had it not been for this memorandum, I should have placed it after that of Sir John Paston to John Paston, Esq., dated 3d of February, 1472-3, 12 E. IV., and to which I refer the reader, as likewise to the letter dated between 8 and 9 November, 1472, 12 E. IV. No. cccxxxi. and cccxxvi.

To my master, Sir John Paston, Knight, be this delivered.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, thanking you most heartily of your great cost which ye did on me at my last being with you at London; which to my power I will recompense you with the best service that lyeth in me to do for your pleasure while my wits be my own.

Sir, as for the matter of Caister,[3] it hath been moved to my lady's good grace by the Bishop of Winchester,[4] as well as he could

[1] Sir Thomas Montgomery had a command at the battle of Barnet, and was a Knight of the Garter.

[2] Maurice Berkeley was second son of James Lord Berkeley, and in great favour with King Edward. He succeeded his brother William as Lord Berkeley in 1491, and died in 1506.

[3] The estate and the hall at Caister were part of the possessions of Sir John Fastolf, knight. John Paston, father of Sir John, was one of his executors, by which means the Pastons got into possession of this seat, &c. The right of possessing it was disputed both by the Duke of Norfolk, and by King Edward IV., the former in 1469 laying a regular siege to it, the Pastons had at last quiet possession.

[4] William de Wainfleet, or Patten, was a firm adherent to the House of Lancaster; and notwithstanding that, continued Bishop of Winchester from 1447 to 1486.

imagine to say it considering the little leisure that he had with her; and he told me that he had right an agreeable answer of her; but what his answer was he would not tell me; then I asked him what answer I should send you, inasmuch as ye made me a solicitor to his lordship for that matter; then he bade me, that, under counsel, I should send you word that her answer was more to your pleasure than to the contrary; which ye shall have more plain knowledge of this next term, at which time both my lord and she shall be at London.

The bishop came to Framlingham on Wednesday at night, and on Thursday by ten of the clock before noon my young lady was christened, and named Anne;[1] the bishop christened it and was godfather both; and within two hours and less after the christening was do, my Lord of Winchester departed towards Waltham. (*Then follows the substance of a conversation between the Lady of Norfolk and Thomas Davers, wherein she promises to be a friend to Sir John Paston concerning Caister, but T. Davers swore J. Paston not to mention her good will to any person except to Sir John.*) And I let you plainly weet I am not the man I was; for I was never so rough in my master's conceit as I am now, and that he told me himself before Richard Southwell, Tymperley, Sir W. Brandon, and twenty more, so that they that loved not laughed upon me; no more but god look (*q. good luck*).

Written at Framlingham the Friday next after that I departed from you. This day my lord is towards Walsingham, and commanded me to overtake him to-morrow at the farthest.

J. PASTON.

Framlingham,
Friday, 1470. 10 E. IV.

LETTER CCC.—(XXXV. vol. ii. p. 47.)

This letter was written at a time when the nation was in a most unsettled state, the late king's adherents every day expecting the arrival of the Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Warwick, their new friends. Some expressions in this letter seem to insinuate that Sir John Paston wished well to their cause; and his putting himself, as soon as the revolution in the government happened, under the protection of the Earl of Oxford, shows he did so.

To J. Paston, &c.

BROTHER, I commend me to you, &c. (*Here follows an order about searching for some writings, &c.*) Also tell John Pampyng that the maid at the Bull at Cludey's at Westminster, sent me on a time, by him, to the Moor, a ring of gold to a token, which I had not of him; wherefore I would that he should send it hither, for she must have it again or else 5*s.* for it was not hers. Item, I pray you be ready, the matter quickeneth both for you and yours, as well as for us and ours.

As for tidings, my lord archbishop[2] is at the Moor, but there is beleft with him diverse of the king's servants; and as I understand he hath licence to tarry there till he be sent for. There be many folks up in the north, so that Percy[3] is not able to resist them; and so the king hath sent for his feodmen to come to him, for he will go to put them down; and some say that the king should come again to London, and that in haste; and as it is said Courtneys[4] be landed in Devonshire, and there rule.

Item, that the Lords Clarence and Warwick[5] will assay to land in England every day as folks fear.

I pray you let not John Mylsent be long from me, with as much as can be gathered; and also that ye write to me of all things that

[1] Anne, daughter and heir of John Mowbray, the last Duke of Norfolk of that name. She was married in 1477 (being quite a child) to Richard Duke of York, second son of Edward IV., who on this marriage was created Duke of Norfolk, &c.

[2] This must mean George Nevile, Archbishop of York, and brother to the Earl of Warwick, who seems to have been suspected by the king, and left at the Moor as a kind of state prisoner.

[3] Henry Percy, the lately created Earl of Northumberland.

[4] The Courtneys were late Earls of Devonshire.

[5] These noblemen landed about the beginning of the month following.

I have written to you for, so that I may have answer of everything.

Other things Batchelor Walter, bearer hereof, shall inform you. Written at London, the Sunday next before Saint Lawrence's day.[1]

Also my brother Edmund is not yet remembered; he hath not to live with, think on him, &c.

JOHN PASTON, *knight.*

London,
Sunday, 5th of August, 1470.
10 E. IV.

LETTER CCCI.—(CV. vol. iv. p. 439.)

The original, with the king's signature, from which this letter is copied, is placed in a MS. folio volume, containing many curious original state-papers, and copies of state-papers of various dates and reigns, formerly belonging to Sir Edward Coke, and is thus endorsed in his own hand. "Privye Seale from Ritchard ye thyrd enhabling Mr. Swannes Auncetours to leavye Armes." How he came to mistake this signature for that of Richard III. I cannot conceive, it being so evidently R.E. Rex Edwardus, that of Edward IV.; neither was there any invasion intended or expected from France, either in September 1483, in the very beginning of the reign of Charles VIII., or in the following year, when that prince desired a safe conduct for the ambassadors which he intended sending to England. This volume came into the possession of that great antiquary Sir Andrew Fountaine, knight, and thence into the valuable library of his nephew and heir Brigg Price Fountaine, Esq. of Narford, in Norfolk, whence I copied the above letter, 4th July, 1788. This warrant, under the king's signature and privy seal, seems to have been issued in 1470, after the escape of Edward from his confinement at Middleham Castle, and after his having defeated the Lord Wells near Stamford, when the Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Warwick, retiring into France, were reconciled to Queen Margaret, and, aided by Lewis XI., meditated an invasion of England in favour of Henry VI. This invasion they accomplished, and landed at Dartmouth in September: on their march they daily increased in numbers, when Edward, on their approach towards him and proclaiming Henry VI., was seized with such a panic that, retreating towards the sea-shore on the Norfolk coast, he embarked aboard a small vessel, and after several escapes from corsairs, &c., he landed safely in Holland, when Henry for a few months reascended the throne. A William Swan is mentioned in Letter ccccv.; but whether he is the same person here addressed does not appear.

To our well-beloved William Swan, Gentleman.

REX EDWARDUS. BY THE KING.

TRUSTY and well-beloved, we greet you well, and forsomuch as we be credibly ascertained that our ancient enemies of France, and our outward rebels and traitors, be drawn together in accord, and intend hastily to land in our county of Kent or in the parts thereof near adjoining, with great might and power of Frenchmen utterly to destroy us and our true subjects and to subvert the common weal of the same our realm.

We straitly charge and command you, upon the faith and liegeance that ye bear unto us, that ye arredie (*make ready*) you with all the fellowship ye can make; and as soon as ye may understand that they land in our said county or nearby, that ye draw thither, as we have commanded other our subjects to do, and put you in uttermost devoir, with them to resist the malice of our said enemies and traitors; and if they and ye be not of power so to do, that then ye draw you to our city of London, by which time we trust to be there in our person or nearby; and if we be not that, that then ye do farther all ye shall be commanded by our council there, upon the pain above said.

Given under our signet, at our city of York, the seventh day of September.

York, Friday,
7th of September, 1470.
10 E. IV.

[1] St. Laurence's day is the 10th of August.

LETTER CCCII.—(XXXVI. vol. ii. p. 51.)

This letter was written after the flight of Edward, and very soon after the restoration of Henry VI. to the throne. Sir John Paston, and his brother John Paston, the writer of this letter, had been and still were of the household of the Duke of Norfolk, but were now making their court to the Earl of Oxford; and hoped by his favour to have appointments under this new government, which took place the beginning of October. [This letter is a curious specimen of the rapidity and facility with which changes took place, even among the great political characters of the time, and the subservience of the Duke of Norfolk to the Earl of Oxford is very strikingly marked.]

To my right worshipful mother, Margaret Paston, be this delivered.

AFTER humble and most due recommendation, as lowly as I can I beseech you of your blessing. Please it you to weet, that, blessed be God, my brother and I be in good hele (*health*); and I trust that we shall do right well in all our matters hastily; for my Lady of Norfolk[1] hath promised to be ruled by my Lord of Oxford[2] in all such matters as belong to my brother and to me; and as for my Lord of Oxford, he is better lord to me, by my truth, than I can wish him in many matters; for he sent to my Lady of Norfolk by John Bernard only for my matter, and for none other cause, mine on weeting (*forgetting*),[3] or without any prayer of me, for when he sent to her I was at London and he at Colchester, and that is a likelihood he remembered me.

The Duke and the Duchess sue to him as humbly as ever I did to them; insomuch that my Lord of Oxford shall have the rule of them and theirs, by their own desires and great means.

As for the offices that ye wrote to my brother for and to me, they be for no poor men; but I trust we shall speed of other offices meetly for us. For my master the Earl of Oxford biddeth me ask and have. I trow (*think*) my brother Sir John shall have the constableship of Norwich Castle, with 20*l.* of fee; all the lords be agreed to it.

Tidings, the Earl of Worcester[4] is like to die this day, or to-morrow at the farthest; John Pilkington, M. W. at Clyff, and Fowler, are taken, and in the castle of Pomfret, and are like to die hastily without they be dead. Sir Thomas Montgomery and Joudone be taken, what shall fall of them I cannot say.

The Queen[5] that was, and the Duchess of Bedford,[6] be in sanctuary at Westminster; the Bishop of Ely,[7] with other bishops are in Saint Martin's; when I hear more I shall send you more; I pray God send you all your desires. Written at London on Saint Edward's even.

Your son and humble servant,

J. PASTON.

London, Thursday,
11th of October, 1470,
10 E. IV. (49 H. VI.)

Mother, I beseech you that Brome may be spoken to to gather up my silver at Guyton in all haste possible, for I have no money. Also that it like you, that John Milsent may be spoken to, to keep well my grey horse an (*if*) he be alive, and that he spare no meat on him, and that he have cunning leeches to look to him. As for my coming home I know no certainty, for I tarry till my Lady of Norfolk come to go through with the matters, and she shall not be here till Sunday.

[1] John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk; Elizabeth, daughter of John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury, Duchess of Norfolk.

[2] John de Vere, a firm friend to the House of Lancaster, and who, during the short exaltation of Henry, was amongst the first statesmen of that party. He died 10th of March, 1412, 4 H. VIII.

[3] [*On weeting* is *unweeting*—without his knowledge.]

[4] John Tiptoft, Lord Treasurer and Lord Constable, absconded on the departure of his royal master, but was taken in Weybridge Forest, in Huntingdonshire, concealed in a tree; and being brought to the Tower, was there beheaded upon a charge of cruelty, on the 18th of October, 1470.

[5] Elizabeth, Queen of Edward IV.

[6] Jaqueline, of Luxemburgh, Duchess-dowager of Bedford, and widow of Sir Richard Widville or Woodville, mother to Elizabeth.

[7] William Gray, a man of family and great learning, was placed in this see by Pope Nicholas V. in 1454. He was lord treasurer to Edward IV., and died in 1478.

LETTER CCCIII.—(CVI. vol. iv. p. 441.)

We here see the various artifices that had been made use of to bring forward this appeal against the Pastons, and the pains that had been taken by those who seemed to have been their friends to distress them by it. The endeavours used to induce the widow to put herself under the Duke of Norfolk's protection, and to become his vassal under the different titles of waive and widow, are curious, and throw some light upon the feudal system. I do not exactly understand the sense in which the word weve or waive is used here, farther than it means to convey the idea of subjection. The widow, however, chose to be her own mistress in the second year, and to take another husband.

To his worshipful master, John Paston, Esquire.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I commend me to your good mastership, &c. Please it you to understand that Redford desired me, on your behalf, that I should go and commune with the woman that was the fuller's wife at South Walsham, which woman is now married to one Thomas Styward, dwelling in the parish of Saint Giles in Norwich; which woman said to me that she sued never the appeal, but that she was by subtle craft brought to the New Inn at Norwich, and there was Master Southwell, and he intreated her to be my lord's wewe (*waive*)[1] by the space of an whole year next following, and thereto he made her to be bound in an obligation; and when that year was past, he desired her to be my lord's widow another year; and then she said that she had lever (*rather*) lose that that she had done than to lose that and more, and therefore she said plainly that she would no more of that matter, and so she took her an husband, which is the said Thomas Styward; and she saith that it was full sore against her will that ever the matter went so far forth, for she had never none avail thereof but it was sued to her great labour and loss, for she had never of my lord's counsel but barely her costs to London. No more, but God have you in his keeping. Written at Norwich, the Monday next after the feast of Saint Luke.

By your servant,
R. L.

Monday,
22d of October, 1470.
10 E. IV.

LETTER CCCIV.—(CVII. vol. iv. 445.)

The date of this letter from J. Paston, the younger, to his mother, cannot be certainly ascertained, though I think I may venture to fix it between 1470 and 1474.

To my right worshipful mother, Margaret Paston, at Mawteby.

RIGHT worshipful mother, after all humble recommendations, as lowly as I can I beseech you of your blessing. Please you to weet that late yesternight I came to Norwich, purposing to have been at this day with you at Mawteby, but it is so that I may not hold my purpose, for he that shall pay me my quarter wages[2] for me and my retinue is in Norwich, and waiteth hourly when his money shall come to him; it is one Edmund Bowen of the Exchequer, a special friend of mine, and he adviseth me to tarry till the money be come, lest that I be unpaid, "for who cometh first to the mill, first must grind."

And as I was writing this bill, one of the grooms of my lord's chamber came to me, and told me that my lady[3] will be here in

[1] [The original is *weewe*—may it not be meant for widow? If not, *waif* is used in its ordinary sense of a *stray* appertaining to the manorial lord, she having been deprived of her husband and natural protector, and thence, feudally, recurring to her lord.]

[2] We are here informed that those who had engaged in the king's service received their pay out of the Exchequer quarterly, for themselves and their waged men.

[3] Elizabeth, Duchess of Norfolk, wife of John Mowbray the last Duke of Norfolk of that name, was most probably on her way in pilgrimage to the image of our Lady at Walsingham, to offer at her shrine, and to obtain through her intercession an easy pregnancy and happy delivery.

Norwich to-morrow at night towards Walsingham, which shall I wot well be another let to me, but I had more need to be otherwise occupied than to await on ladies, for there is as yet I trow no spear that shall go over the sea so evil horsed as I am, but it is told me that Richard Calle hath a good horse to sell, and one John Butcher of Oxborough hath another, and if it might please you to give Sym leave to ride into that country at my cost, and in your name, saying that ye will give one of your sons an horse, desiring him that he will give you a pennyworth for a penny, and he shall, and the price be reasonable, hold him pleased with your payment out of my purse, though he know it not ere his horse depart from his hands. Mother I beseech you, and (*if*) it may please you to give Sym leave to ride on this message in your name, that he may be here with me to-morrow in the morning betimes, for were I once horsed I trow I were as far forth ready as some of my neighbours.

I heard a little word that ye purposed to be here in Norwich the next week, I pray God it be this week.

Mother, I beseech you that I may have an answer to-morrow at the farthest of this matter, and of any other service that it please you to command me, which I will at all seasons (*be*) ready to accomplish with God's grace, whom I beseech to preserve you and yours.

Written at Norwich, this Wednesday in Easter week,

By your son and servant,

JOHN PASTON.

Norwich, Wednesday, April,
between 1470 and 1474.
10 and 14 E. IV.

LETTER CCCV.—(CVIII. vol. iv. p. 449.)

The wages due to these men was for their attendance, under the command of the Duke of Suffolk at the battle of Lincoln Field, usually called the battle of Stamford, where the king (Edw. IV.), in the beginning of March, 1469-70, obtained a complete victory over the rebel forces, commanded by the son of Lord Welles, who, being there taken prisoner, was a few days after beheaded. On the news of this defeat the Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Warwick repaired to Exeter, from thence they went to Dartmouth, and there, about May, embarked, for France. We find by this letter that the king's army followed them to Exeter. This letter by the date appears to have been written just about the time of Edward's leaving the kingdom, when Henry VI. was re-instated on the throne, unless the payment of the men had been longer delayed; if so it was not written till after Edward's return and re-accession. [They were of course Lancasterians, as Suffolk himself was; and this letter must have been written during Henry's short restoration. They had retreated to Exeter, and had probably had no chance of obtaining payment till this time. The battle was fought, March 12, at Erpingham in Rutlandshire.]

To the Bailiffs, Constables, and Chamberlains of our Borough of Eye, and to every of them.

THE DUKE OF SUFFOLK.[1]

FORASMUCH as Edmund Lee and John Barker, which were waged for your town to await upon us in the King's service to Lincoln Field, and from thence to Exeter and (*back*) again; and for that season, as we be informed, they are not yet fully contented and paid of their wages; wherefore, upon the sight hereof, we will and charge that ye without any longer delay pay them their whole duties according the covenants that ye made with them, and ye fail not hereof as ye intend our pleasure. Written at Wingfield, the 22nd day of October.

SUFFOLK.

Wingfield,
Monday, 22nd of October,
1740. 10 E. IV.

[1] John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, died in 1491.

LETTER CCCVI.—(CIX. vol. iv. p. 451.)

It appears plainly from the contents of this letter, that it was written during the short time that Henry VI. was in possession of the throne. The Earl of Oxford was coming to Norwich to see how the county of Norfolk stood affected to the present change in the government, and most probably to be present at the election of members to be returned for that city, as well as for the county, to serve in the ensuing parliament. It is a most curious letter, and gives us a very particular description both of the parties and of the politics of the times.

To John Paston, Esq., in haste.

BROTHER, I commend me to you, praying you that this be your guiding, if other folks will agree to the same, that Master Roos, old Knivet,[1] ye, and the worshipfullest that will do for our sake, as Arblaster, John Jenney, Wodehouse,[2] and all other gentlemen that at the day will be in Norwich, that ye all whole as one body come together, that my Lord of Oxford may understand that some strength resteth thereby, which if it be well handled and prove in the handling, I trow Heydon's party will be but an easy comparison; nevertheless, then must ye beware of one pain, and that is this, Heydon will of craft[3] send among you per case (*probably*) six or more with harness, for to slander your fellowship with saying that they be riotous people and not of substance; require the gentlemen above written that if any men be in Norwich of the country that bear any such harness to do (*make*) them leave it, or any glistering bill (*pole-axe*).

The mayor and citizens of Norwich were wont to have a certayne (*a number*) of men in harness of men of the town to the number of two or three or five hundred, which if they now do in like case, these will owe better will to Master Roos and you than to other folks; and if it be so that they thought not to have none such at this time, I think the mayor will do it at the request of Master Roos and you, if lack of time cause (*prevent*) it not.

Item, be well ware of Clopton, for he hath advised my lord to be altogether ruled by Heydon, insomuch he hath reported that all things and all matters of my lord's and in all the country should (*be*) guided by Heydon; if Clopton or Hygham or Lewis John be busy, press into my lord before them, for they be no sufficient matters, and tell the railing;[4] praying them not to cause my lord to owe his favour, for their pleasure, to some folks there present; for if my lord favour, or they either, by likelihood my lord and they might lose six times as many friends as he should win by their means.

Also, if ye could find the means, Master Roos and ye, to cause (*the*) mayor in my lord's ear to tell him, though he should bind my lord to conceal (*it*), that the love of the country and city resteth on our side, and that other folks be not beloved nor never were; this would do none harm.

If it be so that all things go olyver[5] current with more, to remember that there is out of that country that be not at Norwich, beside me, that be right worshipful, and as worshipful as few belonging to Norfolk, that will and shall do my lord service the rather for my sake and Master Roos's, and the rather if my lord remit not much thing to Heydon's guiding.

Also the goodly means whereby ye best can entreat my cousin Sir William Calthorpe at the said day wse (*advise*)[6] them to cause him, if it will be, to come ye in his company and he in yours, in chief at your chief show, and Master Roos and he in company, letting my said cousin weet that I told him once that

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[1] John Knevet, Esq. of Buckenham Castle.

[2] Sir Edward Wodehouse, knight, of Kimberley in Norfolk.

[3] This is a curious scheme, and worthy the conductor of a modern election contest.

[4] [In the original "for the be no suff. matrys, and tell the rayling." We think the translation should be "for they be no sufficient masters, and tell the real thing," *i. e.* the truth.]

[5] This appears to be the word in the original, but the meaning of it I shall be glad to have explained. [May it not be *clever*—cleverly. *If it be so that all these things, with more, go cleverly current*, that is smoothly, *then to remember*, &c. This appears to us the construction. The whole letter is very obscurely worded; we have altered even more of the punctuation here than elsewhere, and a few of the words that appeared wrong translated, and we trust the meaning is now generally to be understood.]

[6] [*Wse* is probably *use*—"the goodly means.... use them to cause him," &c.]

I should move him of a thing I trusted should be increasing both to his honour and weal.

I sent you a letter, come to Norwich by likelihood, to you on Monday last past, it came somewhat the later, for I wend (*to*) have died not long before it.

Also, I received one from you by Master Blomvile yester even. Tell my cousin W. Yelverton[1] that he may not appear of a while in no wise, I trow my cousin his father shall send him word of the same; do that ye can secretly that my lord be not heavy lord unto him: it is understood that it is done by the craft of Heydon, he gat him into that office to have to be against me, and now he saith that he hath done all that he can against me, and now may do no more, now he would remove him.

The day is come that he fasted the even for; as an holy young monk fasted more than all the convent, after that for his holiness and fasting hoped to be abbot, which afterward was abbot, then left he his abstinence, saying, "the day was come that he fasted the even for."

Brother, I pray you recommend me to my Lord of Oxford's good lordship; and whereas I told my lord that I should have awaited upon his lordship in Norfolk, I would that I might so have done lever (*rather*) than an hundred pound; but in good faith these matters that I told my lord (*I*) trowed should let me were not finished till yesterday, wherefore of that cause, and also since Hallowmass every other day must not hold up mine head, nor yet may, insomuch that since the said day, in Westminster Hall and in other place, I have gone with a staff as a ghost, as men said, more like that I rose out of the earth than out of a fair lady's bed, and yet am in like case, saving I am in good hope to amend, wherefore I beseech his lordship to pardon me, and at another time I shall make double amends, for by my troth a man could not have hired me for five hundred marks (333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) with so good will to have ridden into Norfolk, as to have at this season there to have awaited on his lordship; and also I would have been glad, for my lord should have known what service that I might have done his lordship in that country.

Item, your gear is sent to you as Thomas Stomps saith, saving Mylsent's gear and the chaffron which I cannot intreat Thomas Stomps to go there for this three or four days, wherefore I knocked him on the crown, &c.

Item, look that ye take heed that the letter were not broken[2] ere that came to your hands, &c. Written at *London*, on *Thursday* next after Saint Erkenwald's day[3] (*14th November*).

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

London, Thursday,
15th of November, 1470,
10 E. IV. (49 H. VI.)

LETTER CCCVII.—(CX. vol. iv. p. 459.)

These facetious verses seem to have been written without any regard to quantity, the rhyming of the lines in each stanza appears to be all that was attended to; they are here produced only as a specimen of the Latin poetry of the age, for other merit of any kind they have none, as they abound in false quantity, false concord, &c. &c. They were written by the seneschal of the Earl of Oxford, but to whom, unless by the Black Knight we may suppose Sir John Paston to be intended, it is not to be discovered.

Senescallus Comitis Oxoniæ nigro Militi.

NON decet senescallo tam magni comitis
Ut comes Oxoniæ verbis in Anglicis
Scribere epistolas, vel suis in nunciis
Aliquid proponere si non in Latinis.

Igitur ille pauperculus prædicti comitis
Magnus senescallus magni comitatis
Nuncupatur Norff. Latinis in verbis
Apud Knapton in curiâ in formâ judicis.

[1] William Yelverton had been in the interest of Edward IV. and therefore durst not appear till he had secured a pardon from the present government.

[2] The caution concerning the safe delivery of the letter unopened is worthy of observation.

[3] Erkenwald, Bishop of London, founded one monastery at Chertsey, in Surrey, for men, and another at Barking, in Essex, for women, who before that time were often obliged to retire into France for want of a proper retreat in England. He was the son either of Offa or Ina, a king of the East Angles, and died at Barking, in the latter end of the seventh century, when his body was interred in his own cathedral, but was taken up in 1148, and deposited anew with great veneration, on the 14th of November.

Tibi nigro militi salutem, et omnibus
Notifico, quod Langdon ille homunculus
Nullam pecuniam liberare vult gentibus,
Quod est magnum impedimentum nostris operibus;

Idcirco tibi mando sub pœnâ contemptûs,
Quod tu indilato propriis manibus
Scribas tuas litteras, quod ille homunculus
Copiam pecuniæ deliberat gentibus:

Sin autem per litteras has nostras patentes
Ego and operarii, qui sunt consentientes
Omnes unâ voce promemus suos dentes
Nisi liberet pecuniam, cum simus egentes.

Teste meipso apud Knapton predicta,
Est et mihi testis Maria Benedicta,
Quod vicesimo die Julii non inderelicta
Erat summe solidi, res hæc non est ficta.
20th of July.

LETTER CCCVIII.—(XXXVII. vil. ii. p. 55.)

Sir Thomas de Vere, knight, was third brother to John de Vere, Earl of Oxford. It appears from this letter, that the county of Norfolk was in the interest of Henry VI., and by the orders which it contains, that the Earl had had advice from his brother of the appearance of Edward's fleet on that coast, and of its proceeding from thence to the north. Holinshed informs us that Edward came before Cromer, in Norfolk, on the 12th of March, where he sent on shore Sir Robert Chamberlaine, Sir Gilbert Debenham, and others, to understand how the country stood affected. They found the vigilance of the Earl of Oxford, and the great preparations he had made, were such, that it would be unsafe to land, and therefore they steered northwards.

To my right dear and well-beloved Brother, Thomas Vere.

RIGHT dear and well-beloved brother, I commend me heartily unto you; certifying you that I have received your writing, directed now last unto me, by my servant William Cooke, by which I understand the faithful guiding and disposition of the country to my great comfort and pleasure; which I doubt not shall redound to the greatest praising and worship that ever did till (*to*) any country; certifying you farthermore that by Nicheson of your other tidings last sent unto me; also these by Robert Porter. I have disposed me with all the power that I can make in Essex and Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, and other places to be on Monday next coming at Bury, which purpose I intend to observe with God's grace, towards you into Norfolk, to the assistance of you and the country, in case Edward with his company had arrived there, and yet I shall do the same notwithstanding; for if he arrive northward, like as ye weet by likelihood he should, I cast (*intend*) to follow and pursue him, and where(*as*) ye desire that I should send you word what disposition shall be taken in the country where ye be, I desire you, that ye, by the advice of the Gentlemen which be there, chuse three or four and send them to me at Bury on Monday next; and then I and they, with my council, shall take a direction for the surety of all that country by God's grace; by whom I shall send then to you relation whether ye shall remain still there yourself, or resort to me with all those that be accompanied with you, and Jesu preserve you. At Hithingham (*Heningham*) the 14th day of March.

By your loving brother,
OXYNFORD.

Heningham, or Hedingham Castle, in Essex,
14th of March, 1470, 11 E. IV. (49 H. VI.)

LETTER CCCIX.—(XXXVIII. vol. ii. p. 59.)

This spirited letter was written immediately after notice of the landing of Edward at Ravenspur, in Yorkshire, on the 14th of March; but whether the forces raised in Norfolk, and the neighbouring counties, marched towards Newark does not appear;—if they did, they and those they might meet there, never faced Edward's army, which came forwards to the Earl of Warwick's forces entrenched at Coventry. Edward there made

a feint of attacking them, but being joined by his brother the Duke of Clarence, it was determined to omit that, and proceed immediately to London; where he arrived on the 11th of April without opposition, and instantly re-assumed the government of the kingdom.

To my right trusty and well-beloved Henry Spilman, Thomas Seyve, John Seyve, James Radclif, John Brampton the elder, and to each of them.

TRUSTY and well beloved, I commend me to you, letting you weet that I have credible tidings that the king's great enemies and rebels, accompanied with enemies estrangers, be now arrived and landed in the north parts of this his land, to the utter destruction of his royal person, and subversion of all his realm, if they might attain; whom to encounter and resist, the king's highness hath commanded and assigned me, under his seal, sufficient power and authority to call, raise, gather, and assemble, from time to time, all his liege people of the shire of Norfolk, and other places to assist, aid, and strengthen me in the same intent.

Wherefore, in the king's name, and by authority aforesaid, I straitly charge and command you, and in my own behalf heartily desire and pray you that, all excuses laid a-part ye and each of you, in your own persons, defensibly arrayed, with as many men as ye may goodly make, be on Friday next coming at Lynn, and so forth to Newark; where with the leave of God I shall not fail to be at that time; intending from thence to go forth with the help of God, you, and my friends, to the rencounter of the said enemies; and that ye fail not hereof, as ye tender the weal of our said sovereign Lord and all this his realm.

Written at Bury, the 19th day of March.

OXYNFORD.

Bury, 19th of March,
1470, 11 E. IV. (49 H. VI.)

LETTER CCCX.—(XXXIX. vol. ii. p. 61.)

To the right worshipful and special singular master, Sir John Paston, Knight, be this delivered.

AFTER due recommendation had, with all my service, &c. (*Here follow copies of indictments and appeals procured against Sir John Paston, and his servants;—and likewise other law business.*)

As for tidings, here in this country be many tales, and none accord with other; it is told me by the under-sheriff that my Lord of Clarence is gone to his brother late king; insomuch that his men have the gorget on their breasts, and the rose over it. And it is said that the Lord Howard [1] hath proclaimed King E(*dward*) king of England in Suffolk.

Yours, and at your commandment,

JAMES GRESHAM.

Latter end of March,
or beginning of April,
1471, 11 E. IV. (49 H. VI.)

LETTER CCCXI.—(XL. vol. ii. p. 63.)

This curious letter was written by Sir John Paston to his mother, the fourth day after the battle of Barnet, wherein he had personally fought; and which may be said to have settled Edward almost securely on the throne, by depriving him of his implacable enemy the great Earl of Warwick, who here fell, most furiously fighting. His brother, the Marquis of Montagu, shared the same fate; Sir John Paston shows himself a true Lancastrian, and even now entertains great hopes of a change of affairs favourable to Henry;—these, I suppose, were raised by the landing of Queen Margaret and her son, Prince Edward, in Dorsetshire, but they proved of short continuance, for at the fatal battle of Tewkesbury, fought on the 4th of May following, her army was totally routed, and herself and son taken prisoners; when the latter was almost immediately most basely murdered in the presence of Edward; and our historians say that this young prince fell by the swords of the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, and of the Lords Dorset and Hastings. He was only eighteen years of age, and was buried, without any funeral pomp, in the church of the Black Friars, in Tewkesbury. It seems somewhat surprising that Sir John should commit to paper his wishes and opinions so fully at a time when he was scarcely at liberty himself, and had reason to fear that, if his sentiments were discovered, his life might be in danger. [Hall is the first historian who mentions Clarence and Gloucester

[1] John Howard, afterwards the first Duke of Norfolk of that name.

as participating in this murder. The monk of Croyland, a contemporary, merely says it was done by "certain persons;" and Fabyan, a boy at the time, that the king "strake him with his gauntlet upon the face; after which stroke so by him received, he was by the king's servants incontinently slain."]

To my Mother.

MOTHER, I recommend me to you, letting you weet, that blessed be God, my brother John (*Paston*) is alive and fareth well, and in no peril of death; nevertheless he is hurt with an arrow on his right arm beneath the elbow; and I have sent him a surgeon, which hath dressed him, and he telleth me that he trusteth that he shall be all whole within right short time.

It is so that John Mylsent is dead, God have mercy on his soul! and William Mylsent is alive, and his other servants all be escaped by all likelihood.

Item, as for me, I am in good case, blessed be God; and in no jeopardy of my life as me list myself; for I am at my liberty if need be.

Item, my lord archbishop[1] is in the Tower; nevertheless I trust to God that he shall do well enough: he hath a safeguard for him and me both; nevertheless we have been troubled since, but now I understand that he hath a pardon; and so we hope well.

There are killed upon the field, half a mile from Barnet, on Easter day, the Earl of Warwick, the Marquis Montagu,[2] Sir William Tyrell,[3] Sir Lewis Johns, and divers other esquires of our country, Godmerston, and Booth.

And on the King Edward's party, the Lord Cromwell,[4] the Lord Say,[5] Sir Humphrey Bourchier[6] of our country, which is a sore moonyd (*moaned*) man here; and other people of both parties to the number of more than a thousand.[7]

As for other tidings, (*it*) is understood here, that the Queen Margaret[8] is verily landed and her son in the west country, and I trow (*believe*) that as to-morrow, or else the next day, the King Edward will depart from hence to her ward to drive her out again.

Item, I beseech you that I may be recommended to my cousin Lomner, and to thank him for his good will to me ward if I had had need, as I understood by the bearer hereof; and I beseech you on my behalf to advise him to be well ware of his dealing or language as yet, for the world I assure you is right queasy (*unsettled*), as ye shall know within this month; the people here feareth it sore.

God hath showed himself marvellously like him that made all, and can undo again when him list; and I can think that by all likelihood shall show himself as marvellous again, and that in short time; and as I suppose oftener than once in cases like.

Item, it is so that my brother is unpurveyed (*unprovided*) of money, I have holpen (*helped*) him to my power and above; wherefore, as it pleaseth you, remember him, for [*I*] cannot purvey for myself in the same case.

Written at London the Thursday in Easter week.

I hope hastily to see you. All this bill must be secret.[9] Be ye not a doubted (*suspicious*)[10] of the world, I trust all shall be well; if it thus continue I am not all undone, nor none of us; and if otherwise then, &c. &c.

London, Thursday,
18th of April, 1471. 11 E. IV.

[1] George Nevile, Archbishop of York;—it was from the custody of this prelate that Edward escaped, after having been surprised and taken prisoner by the Earl of Warwick in 1470; perhaps the kind treatment of his then prisoner now procured his pardon.

[2] The bodies of these two noblemen were exposed three days to public view in St. Paul's Cathedral, and then buried at Bisham Abbey, Berkshire.

[3] Sir William Tyrel was cousin to Sir James Tyrel, the afterwards supposed murderer of Edward V. and his brother the Duke of York.

[4] Humphery Bourchier, third son of Henry Earl of Essex, had summons to parliament in 1461, as Lord Cromwell, in right of his wife.

[5] William Fienes, Lord Say.

[6] Son of John Lord Berners.

[7] This number is considerably less than the least given by any of our historians, who, some of them, made the list of slain to amount to 10,000, others to 4000, and those who speak the most moderately to 1500 men. The battle of Barnet began on the morning, and lasted till afternoon on Easter Sunday, the 14th of April, 1471.

[8] Queen Margaret, and Prince Edward her son, landed at Weymouth, in Dorsetshire, about the 13th or 14th of April.

[9] Sir John had sufficient reason to say, "All this bill must be secret," for if the conclusion of this letter had been seen by the York party, his liberty, if not his life, would have been at stake.

[10] [We rather think *suspected* is meant; *i. e.* if they do nothing to make them suspected.]

LETTER CCCXII.—(XLI. vol. ii. p. 69.)

This curious and secret letter, without name, date, or direction, was written by some person of consequence in this reign, and I believe by John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, after the unsuccessful battle of Barnet when he retreated with some of his men towards Scotland; but discovering a design to betray him, he privately left them, and went into Wales to join the Earl of Pembroke. The supplies of men and money, &c. herein required to be sent to him were intended to strengthen the queen's army, which was now with the utmost expedition assembling, and which before the Earls of Pembroke and Oxford could join it, was totally routed at Tewkesbury on the 4th of May following.

To the right reverend and worshipful Lady.[1]

RIGHT reverend and worshipful lady, I recommend me to you, letting you weet that I am in great heaviness at the making of this letter; but thanked be God I am escaped myself, and suddenly departed from my men; for I understand my chaplain would have detrayed (*betrayed*) me: and if he come into the country let him be made sure, &c.

Also ye shall give credence to the bringer of this letter, and I beseech you to reward him to his costs; for I was not in power at the making of this letter to give him, but as I was put in trust by favour of strange people, &c.

Also ye shall send me in all haste all the ready money that ye can make; and as many of my men as can come well horsed, and that they come in divers parcels.

Also that my horses be sent with my steel saddles, and bid the yeoman of the horse cover them with leather.

Also ye shall send to my mother,[2] and let her weet of this letter and pray her of her blessing, and bid her send me my casket by this token; *that she hath the key thereof, but it is broken.*

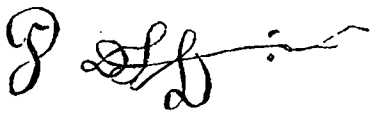
Also ye shall send to the Prior of Thetford,[3] and bid him send me the sum of gold that he said that I should have; also say to him by this token;[4] *that I showed him the first privy seal, &c.*

Also let Paston, Felbrig, and Brews, come to me.

Also ye shall deliver the bringer of this letter an horse, saddle, and bridle.

Also ye shall be of good cheer, and take no thought (*be not melancholy*), for I shall bring my purpose[5] about now by the grace of God who have you in keeping.

O . . . . . B.[6]



April, 1471. 11 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXIII.—(I. vol. v. p. 3.)

[THIS letter is from J. Paston to his mother, and contains an account from J. Paston himself, of his wounded state, and great want of money, confirmatory of the letter of Sir J. Paston his brother (cccxi.). It was written in London, April 30, 1471; and although he says "now I have neither meat, drink, clothes, leechcraft, nor money, but upon borrowing, and I have essayed my friends so far that they begin to fail now in my greatest need;" yet he is in high spirits, most probably from his knowledge of Queen Margaret's return, and of a large army having assembled in her favour. He appears to have

[1] Margaret, daughter of Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury, and sister to the late Earl of Warwick, and wife of John de Vere, Earl of Oxford.

[2] Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Sir John Howard, knight, who was uncle to John Howard, first Duke of Norfolk of that name. She was now the widow of John de Vere, late Earl of Oxford.

[3] John Vescey, Prior of Thetford, from 1441 to 1479.

[4] The precision of the privy tokens shows the caution observed, lest the money, &c. should be fraudulently obtained by making use of his name only.

[5] This shows the expectations formed by this last attempt of the Queen and Prince Edward.

[6] The first character of this signature may be supposed to resemble an O, and the last a D, though this is *only* supposition.

been very sanguine of her success, for he says "it shall not be long to or than (*before*) my wrongs and other men's shall be redressed, for the world was never so like to be ours as it is now;" but a few days after the battle of Tewkesbury was fought, and the queen totally defeated. One of the principal objects of the letter was to procure money. "Mother, I beseech you, and ye may spare any money, that ye will do your alms on me and send me some in as hasty wise as possible." His horses, however, appear to have as much or even more of his attention than his own affairs. His directions are most minute; one, "if he be not takyn up for the king's hawks," is to have "as much meat as he may eat;" "that he have every week three bushels of oats, and every day a pennyworth of bread;" others are to "be put to some good grass in haste." He writes also for several articles of his wardrobe, and desires his mother most particularly "that nobody look over my writings;" and he adds, no doubt anticipating the success of his party, "I thank God I am whole of my sickness, and trust to be clean whole of all my hurts within a sev'nnight at the farthest, by which time I trust to have other tidings; and those tidings once had, I trust not to be long out of Norfolk." The letter is signed John of Gelston, from Geldestone in Norfolk, where he sometimes resided.]

LETTER CCCXIV.—(II. vol. v. p. 7.)

[The battle of Tewkesbury was fought on May 4, 1471, and in this letter, like the last, from J. Paston to his mother, dated July 17, he tells her, "that this Wednesday Sir Thomas Wingfield sent for me, and let me weet that the king had signed my bill of pardon, which the said Sir Thomas delivered me; and so, by Friday, at the farthest, I trust to have my pardon ensealed by the chancellor, and soon after, so as I can furnish me, I trust to see you." The sudden turns in political events and in the personal opinions of men are perhaps not more remarkable in these times than our own, but when the weightiest arguments were swords or bullets, it is gratifying to observe how little rancour existed in the middle classes, at least against each other. With the leaders of course the downfal or ruin of one was necessary to the rise or maintenance of the other; but among their followers the ties of family, relationship, friendship or acquaintance, though not sufficient to prevent their taking opposite sides in political matters, were seldom ineffectually urged by the defeated towards their conquerors. We have repeated instances in these letters of the interference of friends to procure pardons for their political opponents, and the present is one instance of the facility with which they were granted. J. Paston does not forget his horses in this letter, "he would fain his gray horse were kept in mewe for gnattys," that is, kept in the stable (or mews as is often now used in London) to preserve him from the gnats or flies; and all are to have as much meat as they will eat.]

LETTER CCCXV.—(XLII. vol. ii. p. 73.)

This letter contains no anecdotes of much consequence, yet we may learn from it how little intercourse was kept up between one part of the kingdom and another; no opportunity perhaps having occurred of sending a letter from Norwich to London, unless at the time of the fair; another thing strikes us, which is, the use that pilgrims were of in conveying intelligence. The advice which Sir John hints to his brother is good, and his anxious concern for the safety of his young brethren gives us a favourable opinion of his kind disposition towards them.

To Mrs. Margaret Paston, or to John Paston, Esquire, her son, in haste.

Right well-beloved brother, I commend me to you, letting you weet that I am in welfare, I thank God, and have been ever since that I spake last with you; and marvel for that ye

sent never writing to me since ye departed; I heard never since that time any word out of Norfolk; ye might at Bartholomew fair[1] have had messengers enough to London, and if ye had sent to Wykes he should have conveyed it to me. I heard yesterday that a Worsted man of Norfolk, that sold worsteds at Winchester, said that my Lord of Norfolk and my lady were on pilgrimage at our lady[2] on foot, and so they went to Caister; and that at Norwich one should have had large language to you, and called you traitor,[3] and picked many quarrels to you; send me word thereof; it were well done that ye were a little surer of your pardon than ye be; avise you, I deem ye will hereafter else repent you.

I understand that Bastard Fauconbridge[4] is either headed or like to be, and his brother both; some men say he would have deserved it and some say nay.

I purpose to be at London the first day of the term, send me word whether ye shall be there or not.

Item, I would weet whether ye have spoken with my Lady of Norfolk or not, and of her disposition and the household's to me and to you wards, and whether it be a possible (*thing*) to have Caister again and their good wills, or not.

And also I pray you understand what fellowship and guiding is in Caister; and have a spy resorting in and out, so may ye know the secrets amongst them.

There is much ado in the North, as men say; I pray you beware of your guiding, and in chief of your language, so that from henceforth by your language no man perceive that ye favour any person contrary to the king's pleasure.

I understand that the Lord Rivers[5] hath licence of the king to go to Portugal now within this sev'nnight.

I pray you recommend me to my mother, and beseech her of her blessing on my behalf. (*Here follow some directions about payments of money.*)

Item, I pray you send me word if any of our friends or well-willers be dead, for I fear that there is great death in Norwich and in other borough towns in Norfolk; for I ensure you, it is the most universal death that ever I wist in England; for by my truth, I cannot hear by pilgrims that pass the country, nor none other man that rideth or goeth any country, that any borough town in England is free from that sickness; God cease it when it please him.[6]

Wherefore, for God's sake, let my mother take heed to my young brethren that they be not in none place where that sickness is reigning, nor that they disport not with none other young people which resorteth where any sickness is; and if there be any of that sickness dead or enfect (*infected*) in Norwich, for God's sake let her send them to some friend of hers into the country, and do ye the same by mine advice; let my mother rather remove her household into the country.

Even now Thyrston brought me word from London that it was Doctor Allen that caused your trouble that ye had at Norwich; and that John Pampyng rode for a discharge for you, and that he hath sped well, but how that, wot I not; if ye be clear out of Doctor Allen's danger keep you there, and hereafter ye may scoff as well at his carte (*q. cost*); I pray you send me word of all the form of his dealing with you.

I had almost spoken with Mrs. Anne Hawte, but I did not, nevertheless this next term I hope to take one way with her or

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[1] Bartholomew fair, in Smithfield.

[2] Of Walsingham.

[3] This refers to the part he had taken previous to, and at, the restoration of Henry VI.

[4] Thomas Nevile, the natural son of William Lord Fauconberg, called the Bastard Fauconberg, having adhered to Henry VI. was, on his taking the government, appointed vice-admiral of the Channel, which place, on the change of affairs, he lost; and being a man of loose character, first turned pirate, and then, landing, collected a large army, with which he attempted to surprise London; where being repulsed, he retired, and on the king's advancing towards him submitted; when he was not only pardoned but knighted, and again appointed vice admiral. This happened in May, 1471, but was of short continuance, for between the 13th and 29th of September following he was beheaded, though whether for any fresh crime or not is uncertain.

[5] On a pilgrimage.

[6] I do not find this year marked by our historians as a year of sickness.

other; she is agreed to speak with me, and she hopeth to do me ease as she saith.

I pray you send me word how ye do with my Lady Elizabeth Bourchier, ye have a little chafed it but I cannot tell how; send me word whether ye be in better hope or worse.

I hear say that the Earl of Oxford's brethren be gone out of sanctuary.[1] Sir Thomas Fulforth[2] is gone out of sanctuary, and a great fellowship fetched him, a three score, and they say that within five miles of London he was 200 men, and no man weeteth (*knoweth*) where he is become not yet. The Lords Hastings and Howard be in Calais and have it peaceably; and Sir Walter Wrottesly and Sir Jeffrey Gate be coming thence, and will be at London this day as it is said.

Written at Waltham beside Winchester the day next Holyrood day.[3]

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

13th or 15th of September,
1471. 11 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXVI.—(XLIII. vol. ii. p. 81.)

We may from this letter pick out some curious particulars relative to the church of Bromholm Priory in Norfolk, and likewise form some plan of the embattled mansion of the Pastons at Gresham in Norfolk, buildings which are now both in ruins.

To his well-beloved John Paston, Esquire, at Norwich, or to Mrs. Margaret, his mother.

I COMMEND me to you, letting you weet that, &c. (*Here follows an account that the Duchess of Suffolk*[4] *and Duke of Norfolk intend again commencing appeals against Sir John Paston and his brother, &c. concerning Caister, &c.*) I would fain have the measure where my father lieth at Bromholm;[5] both the thickness and compass of the pillar at his head, and from that the space to the altar, and the thickness of that altar, and imagery of timber work; and what height the arch is to the ground of the aisle, and how high the ground of the choir is higher than the ground of the aisle.

Item, I pray you let the measure by packthread be taken, or else measured by yard, how much is from the north gate where the brigg was at Gresham[6] to the south wall, and in like form from the east side to the west; also the height of the east wall, and the height of the south-east tower from the ground, if ye may easily. Also what breadth every tower is within the wall, and which tower is more than other within. Also how many foot, or what breadth each tower taketh within each corner of the quadrate overthwart[7] the doors, and how many tailor's yards

[1] Till the reign of Henry VIII. all our churches and churchyards were sanctuaries, and protected traitors, murderers, &c. if within forty days they acknowledged their fault, and submitted themselves to banishment;—the most eminent sanctuaries in England were St. John's of Beverley, St. Martin's Le Grand, Ripon in Yorkshire, St. Burien's in Cornwall, and Westminster.

[2] Sir Thomas Fulford was son of Sir Baldwin Fulford, beheaded at Bristol in 1461; he likewise ended his life on the scaffold.

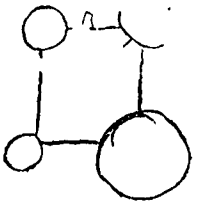
[3] Holyrood day, 14th of September.

[4] Elizabeth, sister of Edward IV.

[5] John Paston was most sumptuously buried in the priory church of Bromholm in 1466; these measures, I suppose, were required in order to adopt a plan for his monument.

[6] This mansion, built by the Stutevilles, was, by licence from Edward II., embattled by the Bacons; Sir William Paston, the judge, purchased this estate.

[7] The drawing, here given in the original letter, is intended, by Sir John Paston, for a plan of the quadrangle at Gresham, and if we suppose that the projection in the side represents the bridge, then that must be the north side, and so we have a complete ichnography of the whole.



is from the mote side, where the brigg was, to the highway, or to the hedge all along the entry, and what breadth the entry is between the dikes.

I pray you, if ye have a leisure in any wise, see this done yourself if ye may, or else if Pampyng do it, or who that ye think can do it; I would spend 20*d.*, or as ye seem [*more if you think proper*], to have the certain of everything herein.

And as for my father's tomb I charge you see it yourself, and when I speak with you I will tell you the causes why that I desire this to be done.

As for tidings, the king and the queen and much other people are ridden and gone to Canterbury, never so much people seen in pilgrimage heretofore at once as men say.

Also it is said that the Earl of Pembroke[1] is taken unto Bretagne; and men say that the king shall have delivery of him hastily; and some say that the king of France will see him safe, and shall set him at liberty again.

Item, Thomas Fauconbridge his head was yesterday set upon London Bridge looking into Kent ward; and men say that his brother was sore hurt, and escaped to sanctuary to Beverley.

Sir Thomas Fulforth escaped out of Westminster with 100 spears[2] as men say, and is into Devonshire, and there he hath stricken off Sir John Crokker's head and killed another knight of the Courtenays as men say: I would ye had your very (*absolute*) pardon at once; wherefore I pray you fail not to be at London within four days after Saint Faith's;[3] ye shall do good in many things, and I pray you send me word hereof by the next messenger; and if it come to Mrs. Elizabeth Higgens, at the Black Swan, she shall convey it to me, for I will not fail to be there at London again within this six days.

Mrs. Elizabeth hath a son, and was delivered within two days after Saint Bartholomew;[4] and her daughter A. H. was, the next day after, delivered of another son, as she saith eleven weeks ere her time; it was christened John,[5] and is dead, God save all; no more till I speak with you.

Written at London on Michaelmas even.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

Item, I pray you let some witty fellow, or else yourself, go to the towns there as (*where*) these two women dwell, and inquire whether they be married since and again or not, for I hold the hoorys (*whores*) wedded; and if they be, then the appeals were abated thereby. I remember not their names, ye know them better than I. Also in the sheriff's books there may ye find of them.

London,
Saturday, 28th of September, 1471. 11 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXVII.—(III. vol. v. p. 11.)

[This letter is from M. Paston to her son J. Paston, dated November 5, 1471, complaining of his brother, Sir J. Paston, neglecting to forward her money which she had borrowed for him, and for which she was security. She very ingeniously shows how his neglect will ultimately occasion him greater loss. The sum required is one hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*), and she says:—"I know not how to do therefore by my troth, for I have it not, nor I cannot make shift therefore and (*if*) I should go to prison; therefore commune with your brother hereof, and send me word how that he will make shift

[1] Jasper Tudor de Hatfield, Earl of Pembroke, half brother to Henry VI. He went into Brittany, to his nephew Henry Earl of Richmond, whom he attended at Bosworth Field, and was by him created Duke of Bedford; he died in 1495.

[2] Spearmen;—men armed with spears.

[3] 5th of October.

[4] 24th of August.

[5] The conclusion of this letter seems to refer to some private amours of Sir John, and if A. H. stand for Anne Hawte, she appears to be a mistress of his; but this is not certain, yet it is probable by the next letter but one that she was his mistress, as he there says "he will tempt God no more so." [If so, it appears strange that the letter should be directed to his brother, even though only as an alternative.]

therefore in haste; I must else need sell all my woods, and that shall disavail him better than a cc. marks and I die; and if I should sell them now there will no man give so much for them by near an c. marks as they be worth, because there be so many wood sales in Norfolk at this time." She proceeds to recount how much she has given and paid for Sir John, and makes some threats as to what may take place on her death. The rest of the letter is of country news, deaths, sickness, &c., but she adds, "I send you half a rial (5*s.*) for to buy with sugar, figs, and dates, for me; I pray ye do as well as ye can, and send it me as hastily as ye may; and send me word what price a pound of pepper, cloves, mace, ginger, cinnamon, almonds, rice, galangal, saffron, raisins of Corinth (*currants*), greynes (*probably grains of Paradise*), and comfits, of each of these send me the price of a pound, and if it be better cheap at London than it is here, I shall send you money to buy with such as I will have."]

LETTER CCCXVIII.—(XLIV. vol. ii. p. 87.)

Margaret queen of Henry VI. was taken after the battle of Tewkesbury, and continued a prisoner till 1475, when she was ransomed by her father, for 50,000 crowns, which he borrowed of Lewis XI. king of France.

To my most honourable and tender mother, Margaret Paston, be this letter delivered.

Most worshipful and kind mother, I commend me to you, and beseech you of your daily blessing and remembrance. Please it you to weet that I have my pardon,[1] as the bearer hereof can inform you, for comfort whereof I have been the merrier this Christmas; and have been part thereof with Sir George Browne,[2] and with my lady mine aunt his wife; and before Twelfth[3] I came to my lord archbishop,[4] where I have had as great cheer, and been as welcome as I could devise; and if I had been in surety that Caister were had again I would have come homeward this day.

(*Here follow directions about Caister, and a hope that it might be had again by the latter end of the term, when he would come home, and put his lands and houses into order.*) And I beseech you to remember my brother to do his devyr (*endeavour*) that I may have again my stuff[5] my books, and vestments, and my bedding howsoever he do, though I should give 20 scutas by his advice to my Lady Brandon or some other good fellow.

As for any tidings there be none here, save that the king hath kept a royal Christmas; and now they say that hastily he will north, and some say that he will into Wales, and some say that he will into the west country. As for Queen Margaret, I understand that she is removed from Windsor to Wallingford, nigh to Ewelm, my Lady of Suffolk's place in Oxfordshire.

And men say that the Lord Rivers shipped on Christmas even into (*unto*) Portugal ward; I am not certain.

Also there shall be a convocation of the clergy in all haste, which men deem will avail the king a dyme (*tenth*) and an half some say. I beseech God send you good health and greater joy in one year than ye have had these seven. Written at the Moor, the 8th day of January, in the 11th of Edward IV.

By your son,

John Paston, *knight*.

Tuesday,
8th of January, 1471-2. 11 E. IV.

[1] For joining the friends of Henry VI. in order to his restoration.

[2] Sir George Browne, knight, of Beechworth Castle, in Surry.

[3] Twelfth day, 6th of January.

[4] George Nevile, Archbishop of York.

[5] These were what had been taken at Caister, I suppose.

LETTER CCCXIX.—(XLV. vol. ii. p. 91.)

We have in this letter a clue to conduct us towards a discovery of the reason for the Duke of Gloucester's dislike to his brother the Duke of Clarence, and if this account be true it had a reasonable foundation. The Duke of Gloucester was desirous of marrying Anne (now the widow of Prince Edward, so cruelly murdered at Tewkesbury), daughter and co-heir of the great Earl of Warwick, and sister to Isabel Duchess of Clarence. This alliance we here find was opposed by the Duke of Clarence; not from any point of delicacy respecting the murder of this lady's late husband, (for according to our historians he was equally concerned in that horrid act with his brother,) but because he did not relish the thought of parting with her share of the possessions now vested in him, by his wife Isabel, the eldest daughter and co-heir of Richard Nevile, Earl of Warwick; his apparent design being to deprive the younger daughter of her moiety of her paternal inheritance, and retain it all himself. This was the part not only of a covetous but of an unjust man, and very probably produced that spirit of revenge which afterwards ended in his destruction.

To John Paston, Esq., be this letter delivered.

BROTHER, I commend me to you, and pray you to look up my Temple of Glass, [1] and send it me by the bearer hereof.

Item, as for tidings, I have spoken with Mrs. Anne Hawte at a pretty leisure, and blessed be God we be as far forth as we were tofore, and so I hope we shall continue; and I promised her, that at the next leisure that I could find thereto, that I would come again and see her; which will take a leisure as *(I)* deem now, since this observance is over done; I purpose not to tempt God no more so.

Yesterday the king, the queen, my Lords of Clarence and Gloucester, went to Shene to pardon; men say not all in charity; what will fall men cannot say.

The king entreateth my Lord of Clarence for my Lord of Gloucester; and as it is said he answereth that he may well have my lady his sister-in-law, but they shall part no livelihood as he saith, so what will fall can I not say.

This day I purpose to see my Lady of Norfolk [2] again, in good hour be it.

There is proffered me merchants for Sporle wood, God send me good sale when I begin; that poor wood is sorely managed and treated.

Yet wot I not whether I come home before Easter or not, I shall send you word; no more, &c.

Written the first Tuesday of Lent.

JOHN PASTON, *knight.*

Tuesday,
17th of February, 1471-2. 11. E. IV.

LETTER CCCXX.—(XLVI. vol. ii. p. 93.)

The proportioning of the money left, amongst the creditors, to pay the debts, seems to be fair, but how Sir John's part should be justly worth three the best I do not understand. [The letter is a favourable specimen of the epistolary style of the age. The subjects are various though not important, and are all touched upon with a lightness and ease that make the whole interesting. His praise of the Earl of Arran, however, seems somewhat extravagant, though extremely well said.]

To my right worshipful brother, Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you. (*Here follows an account of some money transactions, &c.*) Item, Master John Smythe telleth me that Sir T. Lyney's goods are not able to pay a quarter of his debts that be asked him, wherefore such money as is beleft, it must be divided to every man a part after the quantity, which division is not yet made, but when it is made he hath promised me that your part shall be worth three the best, &c.

Item, as for one of Berney's horse, whoso hath least need to him, he shall cost him 20 marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) not a penny less.

[1] A poem, written by Stephen Hawes, who flourished in the 15th century.

[2] Elizabeth Duchess of Norfolk, was the daughter of John Talbot the first Earl of Shrewsbury.

Ye sent me word of the marriage of my Lady Jane; one marriage for another one, Norse and Bedford were asked[1] in the church on Sunday last past.

As for my sister Anne, my mother will not remove from W. Yelverton for Bedyngfeld, for she hath communed farther in that matter since ye were in this country, as it appeareth in her letter that she sendeth you by Thyrston.

Tidings here, my Lady of Norfolk is with child she weneth (*thinketh*) herself, and so do all the women about her, insomuch she waits the quickening within these six weeks at the farthest. Also W. Gurney weneth that Heydon is sure of Saxthorpe, and that Lady Boleyn of Guyton.

John Osbern adviseth you to take breath for the wood sale at Sporle, for he hath cast it that it is worth as good as nine score pounds. Beware of Montayn, for he may not pay you so much money with his ease.

I pray you recommend me to Sir John Parre with all my service, and tell him by my troth I longed never sorer to see my lady than I do to see his mastership; and I pray God that he arise never a morning from my lady his wife, without it be against her will, till such time as he bring her to our Lady of Walsingham.

Also I pray you to recommend me in my most humble wise unto the good lordship of the most courteous, gentlest, wisest, kindest, most companionable, freest, largest, and most bounteous knight, my lord the Earl of Arran,[2] which hath married the king's sister of Scotland. Hereto he is one the lightest, delynerst (*nimblest*), best spoken, fairest archer; devoutest, most perfect, and truest to his lady of all the knights that ever I was acquainted with; so would God, my lady liked me as well as I do his person and most knightly conditions, with whom I pray you to be acquainted as (*to*) you seemeth best; he is lodged at the George in Lombard-street. He hath a book of my sister Anne's of the Siege of Thebes, when he hath done with it he promised to deliver it you. I pray you let Portland bring the book home with him. Portland is lodged at the George in Lombard-street also.

And this I promise you, ye shall not be so long again without a bill from me, as ye have been, though I should write how oft the wind changeth, for I see by your writing ye

crosse it
+ + +

can be wrath and ye will for little.[3]

+ + +

Written the 5th day of June.

JOHN PASTON.

5th of June, 1472, 12 E. IV.
(Or perhaps it may be 5th of June, 1470, 10 E. IV. See Letter ccxcix.)

LETTER CCCXXI.—(IV. vol. v. p. 17.)

[JOHN Paston in this letter proceeds with the affairs of Sir J. Lyney's (or Lynes), whose effects he says, in this country draweth but 5*l.*; he recommends his brother to send an inventory of Sir J. Lyney's goods, &c., in London, "which inventory if once had, ye shall have as cometh to your part and more also;" but that "his debts draw 30*l.* 18*s.* 6*d.* He states also that there is some objections to Sir J. Paston's bill for the funeral, in which twenty shillings is charged for wax (lights, we suppose) "which to Master John Smith's imagination, and to all other officers of the court, should not draw past twenty pence." The rest of the letter is chiefly about his mother intending to settle her property by will, and of his own disagreement with Sir J. Gloys. "Many quarrels are picked to get my brother Edmund and me out of her (his mother's) house; we go not to bed unchidden

[1] Banns of marriage we here find were published at this time in the church.

[2] Thomas Boyd, Earl of Arran, in 1466, married Mary, daughter of James II. and sister of James III., kings of Scotland. He was appointed regent, but becoming unpopular, was banished, and died in exile before 1474.

[3] These two words are crossed as here represented, and over them is written, "crosse it

lightly; all that we do is ill-done, and all that Sir James and Peacock doth is well-done. Sir James and I be twain: we fell out before my mother, with 'thou proud priest,' and 'thou proud squire,' my mother taking his part, so I have almost beshut the bolt (*barred myself out*) as for my mother's house." This is a curious picture of the discontent and unhappiness arising from the improper predominance of a domestic (Sir James Gloys was priest and confessor to his mother) in a family. Sir James, however, died in 1473, when administration of his effects was granted to Margaret Paston. The letter is dated Wednesday, July 8, 1472.]

LETTER CCCXXII.—(XLVII. vol. ii. p. 99.)

This letter exhibits to us almost a picture of modern manners, in the terms and address used in recommending a member of parliament to the corporation of Maldon. The agent of the great lady writes to the bailiff of the borough, and to the tenants, &c., to use their influence with the electors in favour of Sir John Paston, a friend of the lady's, in the good graces of the king, and in the interest of the council and the lord chamberlain. It appears too, that a seat in parliament was then an object of pursuit, and not a burden laid upon the representative as we are informed by some of our historians; and although we are apt to suppose that there is now more interest made and more bribery used in obtaining a seat in the House of Commons than there was three hundred years ago; the desire of parliamentary interest, we here see, was much the same.—Engines were set at work, the patronage of the great was held out, and promises were made even as at this day; and though the friends of a candidate would not now come from divers parts of the country to Norwich, (see the next letter) break their fasts, and return home again at the expense of the candidate, for a bill amounting to nine shillings and one penny halfpenny, yet the motive is still the same, the manners, customs, and expenses of the times forming the only difference. [The postscript contains also a gently insinuated threat, that he is coming for the rents.]

To my right trusty friend John Carenton, bailiff of Maldon.

RIGHT trusty friend, I commend me to you, praying you to call to your mind, that like as ye and I communed of, it were necessary for my lady and you all, her servants and tenants, to have this parliament as for one of the burgesses of the town of Maldon, such a man of worship and of wit as were towards my said lady; and also such one as is in favour of the king, and of the lords of his council nigh about his person: certifying you, that my said lady for her part and such as be of her council, be most agreeable that both ye and all such as be her farmers and tenants and well-willers, should give your voice to a worshipful knight, and one of my lady's council, Sir John Paston; which stands greatly in favour with my lord chamberlain; and what my said lord chamberlain may do with the king and with all the lords of England, I trow it be not unknown to you most of any one man alive. Wherefore, by the means of the said Sir John Paston to my said lord chamberlain, both my lady and ye of the town could not have a meeter (*properer*) man to be for you in the parliament to have your needs sped (*interests forwarded*) at all seasons. Wherefore I pray you labour all such as be my lady's servants, tenants, and well-willers, to give their voices to the said Sir John Paston, and that ye fail not to speed my lady's intent in this matter as ye intend to do her as great a pleasure as if ye gave her an 100*l.* And God have you in his keeping. Written at Fishly, the 20th day of September.

JAMES ARBLASTER.[1]

I pray you be ready with all the accounts belonging to my lady, at the farthest within eight days next after Pardon Sunday, for then I shall be with you with God's grace, who have you in keeping.

Fishly,
Sunday, 20th of September,
1472. 12 E. IV.

[1] James Arblaster, Esq., a gentleman of fortune in the county of Norfolk.

LETTER CCCXXIII.—(XLVIII. vol. ii. p. 103.)

We have here a curious description of the council of a great man, and find it composed of gentlemen of family and fortune. Matters respecting the property of their lord come before them, they debate upon the subject and deliver their opinion; but if that opinion differed from that of the great man, we find he took the liberty of adopting his own.

To my right worshipful brother, Sir John Paston, Knight.

RIGHT worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you; letting you weet that your desire, as for the knights of the shire,[1] was an impossible (*thing*) to be brought about; for my Lord of Norfolk[2] and my Lord of Suffolk[3] were agreed more than a fortnight ago to have Sir Robert Wyngfield and Sir Richard Harcourt, and that knew I not till it was Friday last past. I had sent ere I rode to Framlingham to warn as many of your friends to be at Norwich, as this Monday, to serve your intent as I could; but when I came to Framlingham, and knew the appointment that was taken for the two knights, I sent warning again to as many as I might, to tarry at home; and yet there came to Norwich this day as many as their costs drew to 9*s.* 1½*d.* paid and reckoned by Peacock and R. Capron; and yet they did but break their fast and departed; and I thanked them in your name, and told them that ye would have no voice as this day, for ye supposed not to be in England when the parliament should be; and so they came not at the Shire-house, for if they had it was thought, by such as be your friends here, that your adversaries would have reported that ye had made labour to have been one, and that ye could not bring your purpose about.

I sent to Yarmouth, and they have promised also to Doctor Aleyn and John Russe to be (*burgesses*) more than three weeks ago.

James Arblaster hath written a letter to the bailiff of Maldon in Essex to have you a burgess there; how Jude shall speed let him tell you when ye speak together.

Sir, I have been twice at Framlingham since your departing; but now the last time the council was there, I saw your letter which was better than well endited. R. C. was not at Framlingham when the council was there, but I took my own advice, and delivered it to the council with a proposition therewith, as well as I could speak it; and my words were well taken, but your letter a thousand fold better; when they had read it they showed it to my lady;[4] after that my lady had seen it I spoke with my lady, offering to my lord and her your service, and besides that, ye to do my lord a pleasure[5] and her a better, so as ye might depart without any sum specified; she would not tell in that matter, but remitted me again to the council, for she said and she spoke in it till my lord and the council were agreed, they would lay the weight of all the matter on her, which should be reported to her shame; but this she promised, to be helping so it were first moved by the council; then I went to the council and offered before them your service to my lord, and to do him a pleasure, for the having again of your place and lands in Caister 40*l.*, not speaking of your stuff nor thing else; so they answered me your offer was more than reasonable, and if the matter were theirs, they said, they wist (*knew*) what conscience would drive them to, they said they would move my lord with it, and so they did; but then the tempest arose, and he gave them such an answer that none of them all would tell it me; but when I asked an answer of them they said; "And (*if*) some lords or greater men moved my lord with it, the matter were yours;" (keep counsel.) And with this answer I departed, but Sir W. Brandon, Southwell, Tymperley, Harry Wentworth, W. Gurney, and all other of council understand that ye have wrong; insomuch that they moved me that ye should take a recompense of other land to the value, but they would not avow the offer; for I answered them, if they had right they would have offered no recompense; discover not this, but in my reason and (*if*) my lord chamber-

[1] For the county of Norfolk.
[2] John Mowbray.
[3] John de la Pole.
[4] Elizabeth Duchess of Norfolk.
[5] Make him a present.

lain[1] would send my lady a letter with some privy token between them, and also to move my Lord of Norfolk when he cometh to the parliament, certainly Caister is yours.

If ye miss to be burgess of Maldon, and my lord chamberlain will, ye may be in another place; there be a dozen towns in England that choose no burgess which ought to do it, ye may be set in for one of those towns and (*if*) ye be friended. Also in no wise forget not in all haste to get some goodly ring (*at the*) price of 20*s*., or some pretty flower of the same price, and not under, to give to Jane Rodon; for she hath been the most special labourer in your matter, and hath promised her good will forth (*in future*); and she doth all with her mistress. And (*if*) my lord chamberlain will he may cause my Lord of Norfolk to come up sooner to the parliament than he should do, and then he may appoint with him for you ere the farm[2] corn be gathered. I proffered but 40*l*., and if my lord chamberlain proffer my lady the remanent I can think it shall be taken; my lady must have somewhat to buy her a coverchief[3] besides my lord.

A supper that I paid for, where all the council was at Framlingham, 2*s*. 3*d*. and my costs at Framlingham twice lying there by eight days, with 9*s*. 1½*d*. for costs of the country at Norwich draweth about 20*s*. I trow more. By our Lady if it be less stand to your harms, and sic remanet 5*l*. 13*s*. 4*d*.

I ask no more good of you for all the service that I shall do you while the world standeth, but a goss hawk,[4] if any of my lord chamberlain's men or yours go to Calais, or if any be to get in London; that is a mewed hawk, for she may make you sport when ye come into England a dozen years hence; and to call upon you hourly, nightly, daily, dinner, supper, for this hawk, I pray no more but my brother (*Edmund*), J. Pampyng, Thyrston, J. Myryel, W. Pitt, T. Platting, Jude, Little Jack, Master Botoner and W. Wood to boot, to which persons I pray you to commend me, and if all these list (*be disposed*) to speak to you of this matter when Sir George Browne, W. Knyvet, R. Hyde, or any folk of worship and of my acquaintance be in your company, so that they may help forth, (for all is little enough, and ye be not very well willing) I shall so purvey for them, and ever ye come to Norwich, and they with you, that they shall have as dainty victuals and as great plenty thereof for 1*d*. as they shall have of the treasurer of Calais for 15*d*.,[5] and ye peradventure a pye of Wymondham to boot; now think on me good lord, for if I have not an hawk I shall wax fat for default of labour, and dead for default of company by my troth. No more, but I pray God send you all your desires, and me my mewed goss hawk in haste, or rather than fail a soar hawk there is a grocer dwelling right over against the Well with two Buckets, a little from Saint Helen's, hath ever hawks to sell.

Written at Norwich the 21st day of September, in the 12th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON.

Rather than fail, a tarssel proved will occupy the time till I come to Calais.

Norwich,
Monday, 21st of September,
1472. 12 E. IV.

[1] William Lord Hastings.
[2] Corn paid in part of rent.
[3] A head-dress, or handkerchief.
[4] From the anxiety here expressed for an hawk, we may judge of the attention which was paid to the diversion of hawking. Latham, in his book of Falconry, says, that a goshawk is the first and most esteemed kind of hawk; that a sore hawk is from the first taking of her from the eiry till she hath mewed her feathers. The tassel, or tiercel, is the male of the goshawk, so called because it is a tierce or third less than the female: it appears here that a "grosser," or dealer in foreign fruits, &c., sold hawks.
[5] The attendance on the wars in France, and in our garrisons there, must have been very expensive by this account of the difference in the price of provisions at Calais and at Norwich.

LETTER CCCXXIV.—(V. vol v. p. 25.)

[This letter is from J. Paston to his brother Sir John, and is little more than a repetition of his last two letters, complaints of Sir James Gloys, the want of money, some legal matters, and his great desire for a hawk. On this last topic he writes with an earnestness that may well raise a smile. "As for a goshawk, or a tercel, I weened to have had one of yours in keeping ere this time, but 'far from eye, far from heart;' by my troth I die for default of labour; and it may be by any mean possible for God's sake let one be sent me in all haste, for if it be not had by Hallowmas the season shall pass anon; memento mei, and in faith ye shall not lose on it, nor yet much win on it, by God, who preserve you." Dated Norwich, Sept. 29, 1472.]

LETTER CCCXXV.—(XLIX. vol. ii. p. 113.)

This letter is given as containing a specimen of the free and easy conversation of the time, and shows the very intimate acquaintance that subsisted between Sir J. Paston and the Duchess of Norfolk. Sir William Brandon, knight, was standard-bearer to the Earl of Richmond, and was slain in Bosworth Field by Richard III. He was father to Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk [who married Mary, sister of Henry VIII., and Dowager Queen of France. The conversation seems to have been indeed very "free and easy" on the part of Sir John. He seems to have spoken of her as he would of a horse; but it also seems that such language was not well received. His concluding sneer at his brother's passion for the hawk is well expressed.]

To John Paston, Esq., be this delivered.

Worshipful and well-beloved brother, I recommend me to you; letting you weet that I sent you a letter and ring with a diamond; in which letter ye might well conceive what I would ye should do with the same ring, with many other tidings and things which I prayed you to have done for me; which letter Botoner [1] had the bearing of; it is so now that I understand that he is either dead or else hard escaped; whereof I am right heavy; and am not certain whether the said letter and ring came to your hands or not.

I would not that letter were seen with some folks, wherefore I pray you take good heed how that letter cometh to your hands whole or broken, and in especial I pray you get it if ye have it not.

Also I pray you feel my Lady of Norfolk's disposition to me wards, and whether she took any displeasure at my language, or mocked or disdained my words which I had to her at Yarmouth, between the place where I first met with her and her lodging; for my Lady Brandon and Sir William also asked me what words I had had to her at that time; they said that my lady said I gave her thereof,[2] and that I should have said that my lady was worthy to bear a lord's son,[3] for she could cherish it and deal warily with it.

In truth either the same, or words much like, I had to her, which words I meant as I said; they say too that I said she took her ease. Also (*that*) I should have said that my lady was of stature good, and had sides long and large, so that I was in good hope she should bear a fair child; he was not laced, nor braced in, to his pain, but that she left him room to play him in; they say that I said my lady was large and great, and that it should have room enough;[3] and thus whether my lady mock me, or they, I wot not; I meant well by my troth to her and to that she is with, as any he that oweth her best will in England; if ye can by any mean weet whether my lady take it to displeasure or not, or whether she think I mocked her, or if she weet it but lewdness of myself, I pray you send me word, for I wot not whether I may trust this Lady Brandon or not.

As for tidings now, here be but few, save that, as I understand, ambassadors of Brittany shall come to London to-morrow; and men say that the Lord [4] Rivers and Scales shall hastily come home, and men say that there

[1] William Botoner, otherwise Worcester.

[2] I paid her off, or treated her with unceremonious language.

[3] [The words of the original in both passages are somewhat coarser.]

[4] Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers, &c. went to endeavour to obtain possession of the Earls of Pembroke and Richmond, who were detained as prisoners by the Duke of Brittany.

is many of the soldiers that went to him into Brittany been dead of the flux and other epidemy, that the remanent should come home with the Lord Scales; and some say that these ambassadors come for more men; and this day runneth a tale that the Duke of [1] Brittany should be dead, I believe it not.

I sent you word of a hawk; I heard not from you since; I do and shall do that is possible in such a need.

Also I cannot understand that my Lord of Norfolk shall come here this time, wherefore I am in a great agony how is best for me to sue to him for rehaving of my place; that good lord weeteth full little how much harm he doth me, and how little good or worship it doth him. I pray you send me your advice. No more to you at this time, but God have you in his keeping.

Written at London, the 4th day of November, in the 12th year of Edward IV.

I fear me that idleness leadeth your rein; I pray you rather remember Sir Hugh Lavernoy's till your hawk come.

JOHN PASTON, *knight.*

London, Wednesday,
4th of November, 1472,
12 E. VI.

LETTER CCCXXVI.—(L. vol. ii. p. 119.)

I should have thought this child was Anne, if it had not been for the memorandum of "A°. x°." (10 E. IV.) on the back of a letter (ccxcix.) from John Paston to Sir John Paston, knight, to which I refer the reader. The child here expected therefore, whether boy or girl, died soon after its birth; and whether Sir John's good wishes, as to the sex of the child, were successful or not, must remain undetermined.

To John Paston Esq., be this given.

BROTHER, I commend me to you, letting you weet, &c. (*The first part of this letter treats of some money transactions of no consequence, &c.*)

As for the deliverance of the ring to Mistress Jane Rotton, I doubt not but it shall be done in the best wise, so that ye shall get me a thank more than the ring and I are worth or deserve.

And whereas ye go to my Lady of Norfolk, and will be there at the taking of her chamber, I pray God speed you, and our Lady her, to her pleasure with as easy labour to overcome that she is about, as ever had any lady or gentlewoman save our Lady herself; and so I hope she shall to her great joy and all ours; and I pray God it may be like her in worship, wit, gentleness, and everything except the sex.

No more to you at this time, but I will sleep an hour the longer to-morrow because I wrote so long and late to-night.

Written between the 8th and the 9th day of November, in the 12th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, *knight.*

Between the 8th and 9th of November,
1472. 12 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXXVII.—(VI. vol. v. p. 29.)

[THE beginning of this letter chiefly relates to the steps taken by Sir J. Paston for the recovery of Caister, and he writes to his mother, brother, or Roos to assist him in his efforts. He has got, he writes, the king's letter of recommendation, to an agreement, we suppose, for he adds "the king hath specially done for me in this case, and hath put me, and so have the lords, in right great comfort that if this fail that I shall have undelayed justice." He trusts the duchess will be his very good lady, but as she is confined, fears his messenger will not be admitted to her, nor his brother, to move her in his behalf. In that case, he says, "my mother, if

[1] Francis II., the last Duke of Brittany, was born in 1435, and died in 1488.

she were at Norwich she might speak with her, for that she is a woman and of worship." In order further "to move" the duchess, he says, "where [*whereas*] that heretofore I would have departed with an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) to have had her good help, and to be restored to my place, which, not accepted, I told my said lady that I feared my power should not be hereafter to give so large a pleasure; for at that time I was in hope that the Bishop of Winchester should have paid it, though it had drawn an hundred pound: yet forasmuch as men may not lure none hawks with empty hands, I would yet agree to give my lady 20*l.* for a horse and a saddle, so that I be restored to my place." One other passage is remarkable for the independent and somewhat chivalrous spirit shown in it. He tells his brother, "ye may largely say on my behalf for such service as I should to my lord and lady hereafter, which by my troth, I think to do; nevertheless to say that I will be his sworn man, I was never yet lord's sworn man, yet have I done good service, and not left any at his most need for fear; but as, God help me, I think my lady shall have my service above any lady earthly, which she should well have known had I been in such case as I had not been always the worse welcome for that one of my errands always was understood that it was for Caister, which was not acceptable, and I the worse welcome." He also informs his brother that "I am concluded with my lord for you that ye shall be at Calais if ye list, and have three men in wages under you;" so that Sir John had by this time become an influential courtier under the subverter of his former sovereign. This letter is dated Sunday, Nov. 22, 1472.]

LETTER CCCXXVIII.—(VII. vol. v. p. 37.)

[This letter is only curious as containing a further account of John Paston's hawk. Though he writes to his brother Sir John about it with some humour, yet his vehemence about it, and about the other bird, the pie or magpie, approaches very near to anger. He begins his letter "Right worshipful Sir, I recommend me to you, thanking you most heartily of your diligence and cost which ye had in getting of the hawk which ye sent me, for well I wot that your labour and trouble in that matter was as much as though she had been the best of the world, but so God help me as far forth as the most cunning estragers[1] can imagine, she shall never serve but to lay eggs, for she is both a muer de haye, and also she hath been so bruised with carnage of fowl that she is good as lame in both her legs, as any man may see at eye; wherefore all such folk as have seen her advise me to cast her into some wood, whereas I will have her to eyer [*build* or rather *breed*]; but I will do therein as ye will, whether ye will I send her you again, or cast her into Thorp Wood, and a tercel with her, for I weet where one is; but now I dare no more put you to the cost of a hawk; but for God's sake, and there be any tercel or good cheap goshawk that might be gotten, that the bearer hereof may have her to bring me, and I ensure you by my troth, ye shall have Dolly's and Brown's bond to pay you at Candlemas the price of the hawk. Now and ye have as many ladies as ye were wont to have, I require you, for her sake that ye best love of them all, once trouble yourself for me in this matter, and be out of my clamour." He then presses him to urge on his business matters, tells him of having given a ring sent by Sir John to one of the Duchess of Norfolk's chamber women, who "promised to be more at your commandment than at any knight's in England, my lord's reserved;" and concludes with the following curious postscript: "I saw the pie, and heard it speak, and by God it is not worth a crow; it is far worse than ye weened; by God it were shame to keep it in a cage." Dated Framlingham, Tuesday, Nov. 24, 1472.]

[1] [Estragers are falconers. Shakspere introduces A gentle Astringer' as one of the characters in All's Well that ends Well.]

LETTER CCCXXIX.—(VIII. vol. v. p. 41.)

[From John Paston to Sir J. Paston is very unimportant. He thanks his brother for a hat which he understands is coming "by John, the Abbot of St. Bennet's man;" and he says "my mother prays you to get a new licence of my Lord of Norwich that she may have the sacrament in her chapel: I got a licence of him for a year, and it is nigh worn out; ye may get it for the bishop's life, an ye will." The remainder of the letter contains nothing but advice as to the furthering of the suit for Caister. Dated Nov. 1472.]

NUMBER CCCXXX.—(IX. vol. v. p. 45.)

[Is a petition from John Paston the younger on behalf of his brother Sir John, to the Duke of Norfolk for the restoration of Caister, "at the reverence of God and by way of charity;" although it asserts somewhat gently that the Duke's servants had taken possession of the same wrongfully, "and have taken the issues and profits in the name of your said highness by the space of three years and more, to the great hurt of my said brother and me your said servant and orator." This last passage fixes the date about the end of 1472, as the Duke had had possession from September, 1469.]

LETTER CCCXXXI.—(LI. vol. ii. p. 121.)

These extracts are given from the original letter chiefly to show the easy and familiar style used by Sir John Paston, in his humorous address to his brother, when telling him of Rabekin's inquiries after him.

To John Paston, Esq., or to Mrs. Margaret Paston, his mother, be this letter delivered.

Well-beloved brother, (*Here follows an account of letters sent to him from Calais—of farm barley in Flegg hundred, and of old stuff at Norwich, &c.*)

As for tidings here there be but few, save that the Duke of Burgundy and my lady [1] his wife fareth well; I was with them on Thursday last past at Ghent. Peter Metteney fareth well and Mrs. Gretkin both, and Rabekyn recommend her to you, she hath been very sick, but it hath done her good, for she is fairer and slenderer than she was; and she could make me no cheer but alway my sauce was, "How fareth Master John your brother?" wherewith I was wrath, and spake a jealous word or two, disdaining that she should care so much for you when I was present.

Send me word to Hoxon's in writing, what good the bishop did for me at Framlingham, and how my lord, my lady, and all the court are disposed to me wards.

I hear also say that my lady and yours, Dame Margaret Vere [2] is dead, God have her soul! if I were not sorry for her I trow ye have been.

No more to you at this time, but Almighty God have you in keeping.

Written at Calais, the 3rd day of February, in the 12th year of the reign of Edward IV.

John Paston, *knight*.

Calais,

Wednesday, 3rd of February,

1473. 12 E. IV.

[1] Charles the Bold, and Margaret, sister to Edward IV.

[2] Daughter and heir of Sir William Stafford, and wife to Sir George Vere; their son, John Vere, was afterwards Earl of Oxford.

LETTER CCCXXXII.—(X. vol. v. p. 47.)

[John Paston requests his brother to use his influence to procure the discharge of his cousin John Blennerhasset from the appointment of collector of the "task" or subsidy, on the ground that he has not a foot of land within the shire. Taxes and tax collecting seem to have been as irksome then as now, and the collecting probably was not sweetened by a salary, or a gentleman would not have been appointed against his will. He wishes to know, if possible, who had caused the appointment, says the Heydons are suspected, and "if they were the causers it lieth in my cousin Harsset's [*Blennerhasset's*] power to quyt [*requite*] them." He then just mentions the committal of a fortune-teller or prophet to Norwich jail; and concludes thus:—"No more, but I pray God send you the Holy Ghost amongst you in the Parliament House, and rather the devil, we say, than ye should grant any more tasks." The letter is dated Friday, March 26, 1473.]

LETTER CCCXXXIII.—(LII. vol. ii. p. 123.)

The business referred to in the beginning of this letter is not mentioned; what is said of Blennerhasset seems to be meant as a pun upon the name, as written *Blunder hare set*; or perhaps it may only refer to its being a sounding name. [The business is clearly the release of Blennerhasset from the appointment of collector. We think Fenn's explanation of starting the hare very unsatisfactory, as also of "beware that 1d. purse;" but we have no better to offer; unless the latter may be Persey or Percy, whose name has already occurred. The original has "ware that jd perse."]

To his dear and well-beloved brother, John Paston, Esq.

Well-beloved brother I recommend me to you; letting you weet that, at the request of Mrs. Jane Hassett [*Blennerhasset*] and you, I have laboured both the knights of the shire of Norfolk and the knights of the shire of Suffolk; I understand there had been made labour that such a thing should have been as ye wrote to me of, but now it is safe.

Ralph Blaunderhasset were a name to start an hare, I warrant there shall come no such name in our books nor in our house; it might per case start twenty hares at once. Beware that penny purse.[1] I read there in the bill of Norfolk of one John Tendall, Esquire, but I suppose it be not meant by our Tendall; and if it be, he shall not rest there if I may help it.

As for tidings, the worst that I heard was, that my mother will not do so much for me as she put me in comfort of.

Other tidings, I heard say for certain that the Lady Fitzwalter is dead, and that Master Fitzwalter shall have 400 marks (266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) a year more than he had: I am not sorry therefore.

As for the world I wot not what it meaneth men say here, as well as Hogan,[2] that we shall have ado in haste; I know no likelihood, but that such a rumour there is. Men say the queen with the prince shall come out of Wales, and keep this Easter with the king at Leicester; and some say neither of them shall come there.

Item, of beyond the sea, it is said that the French king's host hath killed the Earl of Armagnac and all his merry men; some say under appointment, and some say they were besieged and gotten by plain assault.

Farthermore, men say that the French king is with his host upon the water of Somme, a sixty miles from Calais; I leave them where I found them.

I made your answer to the friends of Mrs. Jane Godnoston according to your instructions; as for me, I am not certain whether I shall to Calais, to Leicester, or come home into Norfolk, but I shall hastily send you word, &c.

Written the 2nd day of April, the 13th of Edward IV.

Friday, 2nd of April, 1473.
13 E. IV.

[1] It seems to mean—Beware of that covetous man, or of that poor man, which I know not.

[2] Hogan is the conjuror mentioned in the previous letter.

LETTER CCCXXXIV.—(XI. vol. v. p. 51.)

[CONTAINS nothing of consequence. Sir J. Paston tells his brother that "every man saith we shall have ado ere May pass: Hogan the prophet is in the Tower, he would fain speak with the king, but the king saith he shall not avaunt (*boast*) that ever he spake with him." This proves that the public affairs were somewhat troubled, and that tumults were feared, though they did not take place. The severe rule of Edward IV. and the known dissensions in the family gave probable cause for apprehension. The remainder of the letter is on his private affairs, and he appears to be much displeased with his mother because she would not lend him money, and expresses himself in terms of harshness in extreme contrast with the usual humility of children to their parents at that period. He says, "My mother doth me more harm than [*the*] good I weened she would have done for me. Playters wrote to me that she would have laid out for me 100*l.*, and received it again in five years off the manor of Sporle, whereto I trusted; if she had performed I had not been in no jeopardy of the manor of Sporle, nevertheless I shall do what I can yet: I pray you call upon her for the same, remember her of that promise." Also, "remember her of my father's tomb at Bromholm, she doth right nought; I am afraid of her that she shall not do well." Dated London, Monday, April 12, 1473.]

LETTER CCCXXXV.—(LIII. vol. ii. p. 127.)

The first part of this curious letter informs us of the unsettled state of the nation; and that the Duke of Clarence, pretending only to be getting his party together to oppose the Duke of Gloucester, was supposed to be meditating some treason against the state. These royal brothers had been for some time at variance, and most probably their disputes were heightened at this time, by the late marriage of the latter with Anne, the widow of Prince Edward, Henry VI.'s son, daughter and co-heir of the Earl of Warwick, and sister to the Duchess of Clarence, whose possessions the Duke was unwilling to divide with her sister, now his brother's wife.

To John Paston, Esq., at Norwich, be this delivered.

WORSHIPFUL and well-beloved brother, I commend me to you; letting you weet, that the world seemeth queasy (*unsettled*) here; for the most part that be about the king have sent hither for their harness, and it (*is*) said for certain that the Duke of Clarence maketh him big in that he can, showing as he would but (*only*) deal with the Duke of Gloucester; but the king intendeth, in eschewing all inconvenience, to be as big as they both, and to be a stiffler atween them; and some men think that under this there should be some other thing intended, and some treason conspired; so what shall fall can I not say.

Item, it is said that yesterday two passagers (*passage boats*) of Dover were taken; I fear that if Juddy had no hasty passage, so that if he passed not on Sunday or Monday, that he is taken, and some gear of mine that I would not for 20*l.*

I hope and purpose to go to Calais ward on Sunday or Monday or nigh by, for I came not accompanied to do any service here; wherefore it were better for me to be out of sight.

(*Here follow some money transactions relative to a Doctor Pykenham, his mother, and others.*)

Item, Spring, that waited on my father[1] when he was in Gaol House, whom my father at his dying beset (*bequeathed*) 40*s.* he cryeth ever on me for it, and in way of alms, and he would be eased though it were but xx*s.* or x*s.*, wherefore he hath written to my mother, and must have an answer again; I would that my mother send him as though she lend him somewhat, and he will be pleased, and (*or*) else he can say as shrewdly as any man in England.

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[1] John Paston, Esq. was imprisoned by Edward IV. in 1466.

Item, the king hath sent for his great seal; some say we shall have a new chancellor,[1] but some think that the king doth as he did at the last fields, he will have the seal with him, but this day Doctor Morton, Master of the Rolls,[2] rideth to the king and beareth the sease (*seals*) with him.

Item, I had never more need of money than now, wherefore Fastolf's five marks (*3l. 6s. 8d.*), and the money of Master John Smythe, would make me whole, &c.

Written on St. Leonard's day, in the 13th year of the reign of Edward IV.

Item, send me my vestment, according to the letter I sent you by Symond Dam, in all haste.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

Thursday, 15th of April,
1473. 13 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXXXVI.—(LIV. vol. ii. p. 131.)

The historic facts mentioned in this letter contradict [the dates of them as given by our historians, and place in the year 1473 those which they have given as happening in the year preceding.

To John Paston, Esq., in Norfolk.

WORSHIPFUL and right heartily-beloved brother, I recommend me unto you; letting you weet that on Wednesday last past I wrote you a letter, whereof John Carbalde had the bearing, promitting (*promising*) me that ye should have it at Norwich this day, or else to-morrow in the morning; wherein I pray you to take a labour according after the tenure of the same, and that I may have an answer at London to Hoxon, if any messenger come, as e'en I may do for you.

As for tidings, there was a truce taken at Brussels about the 26th day of March last past between the Duke of Burgundy and the French king's ambassadors, and Mr. William at Clyff for the king here; which is a peace by land and water till the first day of April[3] now next coming between France and England, and also the duke's land; God hold it for ever and (*if*) grace be!

Item, the Earl of Oxford[4] was on Saturday at Dieppe, and is purposed into Scotland with a twelve ships; I mistrust that work.

Item, there be in London many flying tales, saying that there should be a work and yet they wot not how.

Item, my Lord Chamberlain[5] sendeth now at this time to Calais the young Lord Zouch[6] and Sir Thomas Hungerford's daughter and heir,[7] and some say the young Lady Harrington, these be three great jewels; Calais is a merry town, they shall dwell there I wot not whylghe (*how long*).

No more, but I have been and am troubled with mine over large and courteous dealing with my servants, and now with their unkindness; Platting, your man, would this day bid me farewell, to to-morrow at Dover, notwithstanding Thryston, your other man, is from me, and John Myryel, and W. Woode which promised you and Daubeney, God have his soul, at Caister, that if ye would take him in to be again with me that then he would never go from me; and thereupon I have kept him this three years to play Saint

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[1] Robert Stillington, Bishop of Bath and Wells, was the then chancellor.

[2] Dr. Morton was a man of great learning and strict loyalty: he was elected Bishop of Ely in 1478; and in the same year appointed Lord Chancellor;—in 1484 he was advanced to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury, and died in 1500. [Morton's "strict loyalty" is more than doubtful. He had been a Lancastrian, he was now a Yorkist; he conspired against Richard III. in favour of Henry VII., for which he was deprived of his bishopric, and was only restored on the accession of Henry, to whom he became chief adviser and confidant.]

[3] From 26th of March, 1473, to 1st of April, 1474.

[4] Our historians assert that the Earl of Oxford was taken in St. Michael's Mount, in Cornwall, in 1472, and thence conveyed to the castle of Hammes near Calais, where he was imprisoned during twelve years; this could not be as he was now at Dieppe, concerting an expedition into Scotland.

[5] William Lord Hastings.

[6] John Lord Zouch of Harringworth; he was attainted in the first year of Henry VII.

[7] Mary, daughter and heir of Sir Thomas Hungerford; she afterwards married Edward, son and heir to William Lord Hastings, who in her right became Lord Hungerford, her uncle's attainder being reversed.

George, and Robin Hood, and the sheriff of Nottingham,[1] and now when I would have good horse, he is gone into Bernysdale, and I without a keeper.

Written at Canterbury, to Calais ward on Tuesday, and (*if*) hap be upon Good Friday, the 16th day of April, in the 13th year of Edward IV.[2] Your

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

Item, the most part of the soldiers that went over with Sir Robert Green have leave, and be coming home; the highway full, my carriage was behind me two hours louger than I looked after, but I wis I wend that I might have eaten my part on Good Friday, all my garees (*finery*) and pride had been gone, but all was safe.[3]

I pray you if W. Mylsent go from you that he might come to me to Calais, I will have him.

Canterbury, Good Friday, 16th of April, 1473. 13 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXXXVII.—(LV. vol. ii. p. 137.)

This letter shows us the unsettled state of the nation, and the apprehensions of the king concerning the coming of the Earl of Oxford.—The man's confession seems to be founded on good authority, as the earl arrived in England soon after.

To John Paston, Esq., in Norwich.

RIGHT worshipful brother, I recommend me to you, &c. (*Then follow some orders concerning servants, debts, securities, &c.*)

As for tidings, the Earl of Wiltshire[4] and the Lord Sudley[5] be dead, and it was said, that Sir W. Stanley was dead, but now it is said nay, &c.

Item, as for your going to Saint James's, I believe[6] it but atween two, &c.

I heard say that a man was this day examined, and he confessed that he knew great treasure was sent to the Earl of Oxford, whereof a 1000*l.* should be conveyed by a monk of Westminster, and some say by a monk of Charterhouse.

Item, that the same man should accuse an hundred gentlemen in Norfolk and Suffolk that have agreed to assist the said earl at his coming thither, which, as it is said, should be within eight days after St. Dunstan,[7] if wind and weather serve him; flying tales.

No more at this time, but God have you in keeping. Written at London on St. Dunstan's day, the 18th day of May, in the 13th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

London,
St. Dunstan's day,
Tuesday, 18th of May, 1473.
13 E. IV.

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[1] Meaning, I presume, either that he had kindly kept him when he did not want him; and now that he did want him that he had left him; or that he had kept him to be an actor in such interludes. [There appears to us to be no difficulty in the meaning. On his "promise never to go from me," he says he had kept W. Woode there three years to play St. George, &c., *i.e.* merely employed *him* in amusements, and now when he wanted good horsemen, he had left him.]

[2] This is the first letter so fully dated, by which the exact time of King Edward's reign can be precisely ascertained. By the tables to find Easter, it appears that in 1473, the prime being 11, and the Dominical letter C, Easter Sunday was on the 18th of April. Edward the IVth's reign began the 4th of March. The 16th of April, 1473, was therefore the 13th of Edward IV., and consequently he began his reign on the 4th of March, 1460.—N.B. The date of the new year commenced on the 25th of March.

[3] The sense of this latter part is not clear; perhaps he meant to say that he was so sure that his finery was lost, that he might have ventured to promise to eat his part of it on Good Friday without breaking his fast.

[4] John Stafford was created Earl of Wiltshire in 1470. He was brother to Henry Duke of Buckingham.

[5] . . . . . Butler Lord Sudley.

[6] This seems to signify, *I do not believe it.*

[7] In the next letter he is said to have landed in Essex on the 28th of May.

LETTER CCCXXXVIII.—(LVI. vol. ii. p. 139.)

The former part of this letter is of little consequence, except to show us the attendants necessary for a person of Sir John Paston's rank; the latter hints to us the unsettled state of the government; and that the king and the Duke of Clarence were not on amicable terms.

To John Paston, Esq., be this delivered.

RIGHT worshipful brother, I recommend me to you; letting you weet that this day I was in very purpose to Calais ward all ready to have gone to the barge; save I tarried for a young man that I thought to have had with me thither, one that was with Rows which is in the country; and because I could not get him, and that I have no more here with me but Pampyng, Edward, and Jack, therefore Pampyng remembered me that at Calais he told me that he purposed to be with the Duchess of Norfolk, my lady and yours; and Edward is sick and seemeth not abiding, he would see what shall fall of this world, and so I am as he that saith; "come hither, John, my man;" and as hap was yesterday Juddy went afore to Calais ward, wherefore I am now ill purveyed; which for aught that I know yet is like to keep me here this Whitsuntide,[1] wherefore if ye know any likely men, and fair conditioned, and good archers, send them to me though it be four, and I will have them, and they shall have four marks (*2l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) by the year and my livery.

He may come to me hither to the Goat, or yet (*else*) to Calais with a rial,[2] if he be wise, which if need be I would that Barker took (*gave*) him to come up with, if it be such one as ye trust.

Item, I suppose both Pytte and Kothye Plattyng shall go from me in haste: I will never cherish knaves so as I have done for their sakes.

Item, I pray you send me a new vestment of white damask for a deacon, which is amongst mine other gear at Norwich, for he shall thereto as ye wot of; I will make an arming doublet of it, though I should another time give a long gown of velvet for another vestment; and send it in all haste to Hoxon to send me.

I hoped to have been very merry at Calais this Whitsuntide, and am well apparelled and appointed save that these folk fail me so, and I have matter there to make of right excellent. Some man would have hasted him to Calais, though he had had no better errand, and some men think it wisdom and profit to be there now well out of the way.

Item, as for the bishop[3] and I, we be nearer to a point than we were, so that my part is now all the lands in Flegg wholly, the manor of Heylesdon, Tolthorpe, and tenements in Norwich and Earlham, except Fairchild's; but farewell Drayton, the devil do it them (*do them good of it*).

Item, large and fair communication hath been between Sir John Fagge and Richard Hawte for their sister and me, before Doctor Wyntborne and elsewhere, so that I am in better hope than I was by St. Lawrence[4] that I shall have a deliverance.

Item, as for tidings here, I trow ye have heard your part, how that the Earl of Oxford landed by St. Osyth's in Essex, the 28th day of May, save he tarried not long; for if he had the Earl of Essex[5] rode to him wards, and the Lords Denham and Duras (*Galliard de Durefort*), and other more, which by likelihood should have distressed him; but yet his coming saved Hogan his head, and his prophecy is the more believed; for he said that this trouble should begin in May, and that the king should northwards, and that the Scots should make us work and him battle.

Men look after they wot not what, but men buy harness fast; the king's menial men, and the Duke of Clarence's, are many in this town; the Lord Rivers[6] came to day, men say to purvey in like wise.

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[1] Whitsunday, 6th of June, 1473.
[2] A rial a gold coin of 10*s.* value.

[3] James Goldwell, Bishop of Norwich, 1472.
[4] 10th of August.
[5] Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex, lord treasurer.
[6] Anthony Wideville, Earl Rivers, beheaded at Pontefract, 1463.

Item, how that the Countess of Warwick[1] is now out of Beverley sanctuary, and Sir James Tyrell conveyeth her northwards men say by the king's assent, whereto some men say that the Duke of Clarence is not agreed.

Item, men say that the Earl of Oxford is about the Isle of Thanet, hovering, some say with great company, and some say with few.

No more, but God keep you. Written at London the 3rd day of June, in the 13th year of Edward IV.

Yours, JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

London,
Thursday, 3rd of June,
1473. 13 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXXXIX.—(LVII. vol. ii. p. 147.)

Though this letter from Sir John Paston contains nothing very material, it informs us of an engagement at sea between some ships of this country, and those of the Easterlings or inhabitants of the eastern part of Germany. It likewise acquaints us with some private anecdotes of Sir John Paston as a man of gallantry.

To Edmund Paston, Esq., at Calais, be this delivered.

BROTHER EDMUND, I greet you well; letting you weet that about this day sev'nnight I sent you a letter by Nicholas Bardesley, a soldier, which is wont to be at border[2] (*query, brother*) Perauntys; and also an hosecloth[3] of black for you; I wend that ye should have had it within two days, but I am afraid that he deceived me.

Item, I let you weet that Plattyng is coming hither, and he saith that ye gave him leave to fetch his gear and Pytt's; and that is his errand hither and none other, nor he thought never to go from me, nor he will not go from me, as he saith; wherefore I pray you send me word of his conditions, and why ye think that he should never do me worship.

He saith also, that he and Pytt were at the taking of the Esterlings, and that he was in the Packer, and Pytt in the Cristopher; I pray you send me word how both he and Pytt quit them by the report of some indifferent true man that was there; if they quit (*acquitted*) them well I would love them the better; wherefore the next day after the sight of this letter I pray you write again, and send it by the next passage.

Item, I send a little pretty box herewith, which I would that Juddy should deliver to the woman that he weeteth of, and pray her to take it to the man that she weeteth of; that is to say as much as ye know all well enough, but ye may not make you wise in no wise. (*You must by no means seem to know anything of the business in hand.*)

Item, I pray you send me word as ye were wont to do of her welfare; and whether I were out and other in or not; and whether she shall forsake Calais as soon as ye sent me word of or not.

By God I would be with you as fain as yourself, and shall be in haste, with God's grace.

Item, as for my brother John, I hope within this month to see him in Calais; for by likelihood to-morrow, or else the next day, he taketh ship at Yarmouth, and goeth to St. James[4] ward; and he hath written to me that he will come homeward by Calais.

Item, I suppose that James Songer shall come with me to Calais the rather for your sake.

Item, Mistress Elizabeth fareth well, but as yet Songer knoweth not so perfectly all that ye would weet, that he will not write to you of these two days, till he know more; but if she had been bold, and durst have

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[1] Anne, widow of Richard Nevile, the great Earl of Warwick, sister and heir to Henry Beauchamp, Duke of Warwick, and mother of Isabel, the wife of George, Duke of Clarence.

[2] May not this sentence be thus read? Is wont to be at border paravant this, *i. e.* is accustomed to reach the border, march or edge, of Calais much sooner,—before this,—before so much time was elapsed.

[3] Cloth for hosen.

[4] On a pilgrimage, I suppose, to St. James of Compostella, in the province of Gallicia, in Spain. [Not very likely, we think. He could scarcely have made this journey, and been at Calais "within this month," it being then the 5th.]

abiden still at her gate, and spoken with me, so God help me, she had had this same (*box*) that I send now where ye wot of, which ye shall see worn hereafter; it is a pretty ribbon with pretty aglets[1] and goodly.

Make you not wise to Juddy, neither not [*note*] that ye would weet anything, for I may say to you at his coming over he brought goodly gear reasonably.

Item, as for my bill[2] that is gilt, I would it were taken heed to; there is one in the town that can glaze (*polish*) well enough as I heard say; also there is one cometh every market day from St. Omer's to Calais, and he bringeth daggers and fetcheth also, he may have it with him, and bring it again the next market day, for 12*d.* or 16*d.* at the most; and (*or*) else let it be well oiled and kept till I come.

No more. Written at London the 5th day of July, in the 13th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

London,
Monday, 5th of July,
1473. 13 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXL.—(LVIII. Vol. ii. p. 153.)

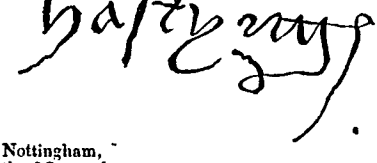
This and the Letter ccexciv. are perhaps the only letters extant of this nobleman, who, though he disliked King Edward's Queen, was a true and loyal subject to the king; and continued faithful to his young Prince Edward V., for which he lost his head in 1483. If we may judge from his expressions in these letters, he was a polite gentleman and a kind master. His remembering "his fellows, the soldiers," in an age when his noble rank placed him so high above the plebeians, characterises him as a commander attentive to the concerns of those under him.

To my right heartily-beloved friends and fellows, Sir John of Middleton, and Sir John Paston, Knights.

AFTER hearty recommendation, I thank you of the good attendance that ye gave unto the king's counsel at Calais; and the good and effectual devoirs that ye put you in to assist my deputy Sir John Scot, in all such things as might concern the safeguard of my charge there. Letting you weet that if there be anything that I can and may do for you, I shall with right good will perform it to my power. And I pray you to recommend me to my Lady Howard,[3] my Lady Bourgchier,[4] and all other ladies and gentlewomen of the said town. And in likewise to the mayor, lieutenant, and fellowship of the staple; my fellows the soldiers, and all other such as (*to*) you shall seem good. And our Lord send you your desires. Written at Nottingham, the 16th day of September.

Sir John Paston[5] I pray you to give credence to such things as my deputy shall show you from me, and conform you to the same.

Your fellow, HASTINGS.



Nottingham,
16th of September,
1473. 13 E. IV.

[1] Pendent ornaments of metal, like tags or points, &c.

[2] A warlike instrument of offence.

[3] Margaret, wife of Sir John Howard, Lord Howard, and afterwards Duke of Norfolk. She was daughter of Sir John Chedworth, knight, and died in 1490, 5 H. VII.

[4] Lady Bourchier was probably the wife of a son of Sir John Bourchier, Lord Berners.

[5] This last paragraph is written by Lord Hastings himself, the former part to "the xvj day of September," by his secretary.

LETTER CCCXLI.—(XII. vol. v. p. 55.)

[This letter, from Sir John Paston to his brother John, touches on many curious matters illustrative of the period. He commences by acknowledging the receipt of a letter from him of the 6th of October, "letting me weet of the decease of Sir James (*Glois*), and that my mother is in purpose to be at Norwich, and I am right glad that she will now do somewhat by your advice, wherefore, beware from henceforth that no such fellow creep in between her and you." He goes on, "ye send me word also that she in no wise will purvey the 100*l.* for the redeeming of Sporle; let it go: as touching that matter, John Osbern told me that he communed with you at Sporle of that matter; further, he devised that Cocket, or such another man, should, to have it the better cheap, lay out the value of six year for to have it seven year, whereto I would agree; and for God's sake, if that may be brought about, let it be done: as ye wot of, it is let for 22*l.* a year, yet the farmer grant but 21*l.*; but to Cocket it would be worth 25*l.*, yea, and better; nevertheless if Cocket will deliver six score pounds, I would he had it for seven years, with this, that my mother be agreeable to the same, because of the interest that she hath for my brother William, which shall not be of age this seven year; nevertheless, as ye know my old intent, I purpose to purvey for him in another place better than there; of which grant of my mother I pray you be my solicitor, in which, an it be brought about, Sporle shall be in as good case as ever it was. John Osbern willed me to make you a sufficient warrant to sell and fell wood at Sporle, which I remember ye have in as ample form as may be; nevertheless, if this mean above written, of letting to farm, may be had, it shall I hope not need to sell or fell much; but I remit that gear to your discretion: but if ye have such comfort I pray you send me word. I may say to you John Osbern flattered me, for he would have borrowed money of me. Item, in retailing of wood there it were hard to trust him; he is needy. If Cocket, or whosoever had that manor to farm for seven year, and paid therefor but six score pounds, he should, to let it again, win 36*l.*, which be much; wherefore, if it might be, it were more reasonable six score and seven pounds were received, and yet is there lost 29*l.*; or else, if ye take less money and fewer years, so it be after the rate, so that there be paid 100*l.* at the least, send word." This is curious, as showing the nature of letting farms, and also would go to show a much lower rate of interest than was generally in use at that time, for 36*l.* as the interest of 120*l.* for seven years is but small, considering the risk of the tenant's rent, &c. &c. The mysterious affair with Mrs. Ann Hawte is again alluded to: "I have answer again from Rome that there is the well of grace, and salve sufficient for such a sore, and that I may be dispensed with: nevertheless, my proctor there asketh a thousand ducats as he deemeth;" but he adds, "another Rome-ruuner here" has told him he means but a hundred ducats, or two hundred at the most. The rest of the letter contains unimportant directions as to his clothes and other matters, except that he says, "as for other tidings I trust to God that the two Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester shall be set at one by the award of the king." Dated London, Monday, Nov. 22, 1473.]

LETTER CCCXLII.—(XIII. vol. v. p. 63.)

[This letter contains chiefly instructions from Sir John Paston to his brother John and his mother, as to empowering him, Sir John, to administer to his father's will. His father died in 1466, and it appears a long time to elapse without this having been done, but the date of the letter is fixed (London, Thursday, Nov. 25, 1473) by its reference to the Earl of Oxford being besieged in St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall, which happened in 1473, where he was captured, and afterwards imprisoned for several years in the castle of

Hammes near Calais, from whence he escaped, and accompanied Henry VII. in his successful attempt on England, dying in 1512; and to his anticipated immediate possession of Caister. With reference to this place he says, "send me word if I have Caister again, whether she (his mother) will dwell there or not, and I will find her a priest towards at my charge, and give her the dove-house and other commodities there; and if any horse-keeper of mine lie there, I will pay for his board also, as well as for the priest's. Item, if my mother should have a new priest, I think that my brother Sir J. Goos were a meetly man to be there; he would also do as ye would have him." This is very cunning advice for his own good, and the advantages he offers to his mother of the dove-house and other commodities must have been then thought very seductive.]

LETTER CCCXLIII.—(LIX.—(vol. ii. p. 155.)

[In the previous letter we have a notice of John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, who is here again particularly mentioned. We may add, however, that, as it is here said, all his estates were confiscated, but were restored soon after the accession of Henry VII.]

Mrs. Margaret Paston, at Norwich.

RIGHT honourable and most tender good mother, I recommend me to you, beseeching you to have, as my trust is that I have, your daily blessing; and thank you of your good motherhood, kindness, cheer, charge, and costs, which I had and put you to at my last being with you, which God give me grace hereafter to deserve!

Please it you to weet, that I think long that I hear not from you, or from Peacock your servant, for the knowledge how he hath done in the sale of my farm barley, nor what is made thereof; wherefore I beseech you, if it be not answered by that time that this bill cometh to you, to haste him and it hitherward; for if that had not tarried me I deem I had been at Calais by this day; for it is so, as men say, that the French king with a great host is at Amiens, but threescore miles from Calais; and if he or his rode before Calais, and I not there, I would be sorry.

Item, men say that the Earl of Oxford hath been constrained to sue for his pardon only of his life; and his body, goods, lands, with all the remanent, at the king's will, and so should in all haste now come in to the king; and some men say that he is gone out of the Mount, men wot not to what place, and yet left a great garrison there, well furnished in victual and all other thing.

Item, as for the having again of Caister, I trust to have good tidings thereof hastily.

Item, my brother John fareth well, and hath done right diligently in my cousin Elizabeth Berney's matter, whereof hastily I trust he shall send her tidings that shall please her; and as to-morrow he purposeth to take his journey to Wales ward to the Lord Rivers.

No more at this time, but Jesu have you in his keeping.

Written at London the 20th day of February, in the 13th year of Edward IV.

Your *son*,

J. PASTON, *knight*.

London,
Sunday, 20th of February,
1473. 13 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXLIV.—(LX. vol. ii. p. 159.)

We have in this letter a pleasing account of the intended excursion of the king into divers counties in 1474; the motive of which most probably was to raise, more easily by his presence and cheerful address, benevolences upon his subjects towards the expenses of his war with France. We are here informed likewise

that the county of Norfolk had been highly spoken of to the king, not only for the riches and hospitality of its inhabitants, but for the beauty and agreeable behaviour of its women; a reason sufficient for so long a stay amongst them, as seemed intended to be made, by an amorous and handsome monarch.

To his brother Sir John Paston, Knight, be this letter delivered.

SIR, I recommend me unto you, letting you weet that, (*Here follows some account relative to a grant from the crown, &c.*)

As for my lord treasurer[1] he was not with the king of all the council time,[2] the which was ended on the 3d day of March. And thither came my Lord of Northumberland,[3] the first day of March, and departed the even afore the making of this letter; and hath indented with the king for the keeping out of the Scots, and warring on them; and shall have large money, I cannot tell the sum for certain.

Also there is a rover taken at Bristol, one Cowper, as I ween, and he is like to be hanged, and he confesseth more of his fellows. Also Edward Heestowe of Dover is appeached of treason of many strange points; and his accuser and he were both afore the king, and then they were taken apart; and he himself confessed it that his accuser accused him of, and many other things more than he was accused of. And he had many lords and gentlemen to answer for his truth and his demeaning afore time, for as I heard say, both the king in a manner, nor none of the other lords nor gentlemen, believed not his accuser till that he confessed it himself, and so he is in the Tower, and like to be dead.[4]

As for the king's coming into the country; on Monday come fortnight he will lie at the abbey of Stratford, and so to Chelmsford; then to Sir Thomas Montgomery's; then to Heveningham; then to Colchester; then to Ipswich; then to Bury; then to Dame Anne Wingfield's, and so to Norwich; and there will he be on Palm Sunday even;[5] and so tarry there all Easter,[6] and then to Walsingham;[7] wherefore ye had need to warn William Gogney and his fellows to purvey them of wine enough, for every man beareth me in hand that the town shall be drank dry as York was when the king was there.

Sir, Master Sampson recommend him unto you, and he hath sent you a ring by Edmond Dorman; and besides that, he required me to write unto you that it were best for you to purvey you of some gentlemany (*gentlemanlike*) things against the king's coming, for sure he will bring you guests enough, and therefore purvey you thereafter. Also, he sendeth you word that it is my lord's mind that my sister, with all other goodly folks thereabout, should accompany with Dame Elizabeth Calthorp,[8] because there is no great lady thereabout, against the king's coming; for my lord hath made great boast of the fair and good gentlewomen of the country; and so the king said he would see them sure.

Sir, my lord hath sent unto the most part of the gentlemen of Essex to wait upon him at Chelmsford, whereas he intendeth to meet with the king, and that they be well appointed, that the Lancashire men may see that there be gentlemen of so great substance that they be able to buy all Lancashire. Men think that ye among you will do the same.

Your country is greatly boasted of, also the inhabitors of the same. I beseech you to remember my horse that you promised me. God keep you.

Written at Sheen, in haste, the 7th day of March, with the hand of your brother,

WILLIAM PASTON.

Sheen, Monday, 7th of March,
1473. 14 E. IV.

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[1] William Grey, Bishop of Ely.

[2] The sitting of parliament.

[3] Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland; this contract was entered into by him most probably as Warden of the Marches; a place of trust, honour, and profit. This nobleman was cruelly murdered by a mob, in Yorkshire, when he was there levying a public tax in 1489.

[4] This expression seems to insinuate that he would be executed privately in the Tower. [We see no reason for this supposition. We think it is merely meant that he was not likely to be pardoned.]

[5] 3rd of April, 1474.

[6] 10th of April, 1474. [It will be borne in mind that the year commenced on March 25.]

[7] I suppose to pay his devotions to the image of Our Lady there.

[8] Widow of Sir John Calthorp, and daughter of Roger Wentworth, Esq.

LETTER CCCXLV.—(XIV. vol. v. p. 67.)

[In this letter John Paston writes to his brother Sir John on the subject of his wooing. He appears a thoroughly careful and wary suitor, as he has two if not three ladies in view, although his "fantazy" inclines him to Mistress Elizabeth Eberton, even if "Eberton wold not geve so moche wt Maistress Elyzabet his dowghter as I myght have wt the other." But we will let him speak for himself. He requests his brother, "ere that ye depart out of London to speak with Harry Eberton's wife, draper, and to inform her that I am proffered a marriage in London which is worth six hundred marks (400*l.*) and better, with whom I prayed you to commune, inasmuch as I might not tarry in London myself; always reserving, that if so be that Mrs. Eberton will deal with me, that ye should not conclude in the other place, though so were that Eberton would not give so much with Mrs. Elizabeth his daughter as I might have with the other, for such fantasy as I have in the said Mrs. Elizabeth Eberton; and that it like you to say to Eberton's wife that such as I spake to her of shall be bettered rather than empeyred [*impaired*] as for my part." If the proffered marriage was not a mere *ruse*, it may or may not refer to the following extracts, which, however, would not justify the assertion of a "proffered marriage" worth six hundred marks. Before giving the passages we may observe that the word "thing," which he applies to her was at that time, and afterward, frequently used as a term of endearment and not of contempt. "I pray you that ye will, as I desired you, commune with John Lee, or his wife, or both, and to understand how the matter at the Black Friars doth, and that ye will see and speak with the thing yourself, and with her father and mother, ere ye depart. . . . . Also that it like you to speak to your apothecary, which was sometime the Earl of Warwick's apothecary, and to weet of him what the widow of the Black Friars is worth, and what her husband's name was; he can tell all, for he is executor to the widow's husband." Here he seems to think his own consent to be all that is necessary. We give another passage to show the nature of a gentleman's wardrobe at that time. "I pray you that Pitt may truss in a mail [*trunk*], which I left in your chamber at London, my tawny gown furred with black, and the doublet of purple satin and the doublet of black satin, and my writing-box of cypress, and my 'Book of the Meeting of the Duke and of the Emperor,'" (probably Charles Duke of Burgundy and the Emperor Frederic III.) The writing-desk of cypress-wood could not have been a common article at this period, and, together with the book, show he had a literary taste. The rest of the letter is uninteresting, except perhaps the statement that his mother will labour "that the two hundred marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) may be had for the wood, so that it seems he could not borrow for his brother, but was forced, like many others since, to "fell and sell." Dated Norwich, Monday, July 25, 1475.]

LETTER CCCXLVI.—(XV. vol. v. p. 73.)

[Sir John Paston here writes to his mother about the means of raising money, but the details are uninteresting. He had been on a visit to his mother, and had been ill, but says he had quite recovered, thanks to her care. He mentions that Courby the carrier hath had "40*d.* to pay for the third hired horse, and he bringeth the three horses with him, and is content for the labour and the meat largely;" this seems a small sum for a journey from Norwich to London and back; the more so as in the previous letter his brother sends him ten shillings for the conveyance of the trunk with his clothes and writing-desk. He concludes the letter in a style that does credit to his taste, and displays some humour. "As for the books that were Sir James's (Gloys, the priest's), if it

like you that I may have them, I am not able to buy them, but somewhat would I give, and the remanent, with a good devout heart by my troth, I will pray for his soul; wherefore, if it like you, by the next messenger or carrier to send them in a day, I shall have them dressyd [*re-bound*, or perhaps *addressed*] here, and if any of them are claimed hereafter in faith I will restore it." The last promise shows it was so common to borrow books, then both scarce and valuable, that it was likely upon a scholar's death that some of them might be reclaimed. Dated Saturday, before November, 1474.]

LETTER CCCXLVII.—(XVI. vol. v. p. 79.)

[This letter is again about money from Sir John to his mother. His uncle William had lent him money, which enabled him to redeem the manor of Sporle, but only on sufficient security, for he says, "I am as much afraid of this land that is in his hand as I was of that that was in Townshend's (his former creditor) hand." He again reverts to the books. "As for the books that were Sir James's, God have his soul! which it liketh you that I shall have them, I beseech you that I might have them hither by the next messenger; and if I be gone, yet that they be delivered to mine hostess at the George at Paul's Wharf, which will keep them safe; and that it like you to write to me what the pain or payment shall be for them." Dated London, Sunday, Nov. 20, 1474.]

LETTER CCCXLVIII.—(LXI. vol. ii. p. 165.)

I have given the former part of this letter as a specimen of the free and easy epistolary style of an age which we are too apt to consider as almost entirely illiterate; on a similar subject a modern gentleman could scarcely have expressed himself in easier terms, or with more propriety, though in one instance perhaps with more politeness.

To John Paston, Esq. at Norwich, or to Roose, dwelling afore Mrs. Paston's gate in Norwich.

Right worshipful and well-beloved brother, I recommend me to you; letting you weet that I have communed with your friend Danson, and have received your ring of him, and he hath by mine advice spoken with her two times;[1] he telleth me of her dealing and answers, which if they were according to his saying, a fainter lover than ye would, and well ought to, take therein great comfort, so that (*even though*) he might haply sleep the worse three nights after.

And such dealing in part as was between my Lady W. and your friend Danson he wrote me a bill thereof, which I send you herewith; and that that longeth to me to do therein it shall not fail to leave all other business apart; nevertheless within three days I hope so to deal herein that I suppose to set you in certainty how that ye shall find her for ever hereafter.

It is so, as I understand, that ye be as busy on your side for your friend Danson whereas [*where*][2] ye be; I pray God send you both good speed in these works, which, if they be brought about, each of you is much beholden to other; yet were it pity that such crafty

[1] I do not know to whom this refers: it relates to some lady to whom he then paid his addresses, (the Lady W. after-mentioned I suppose,) and who by the next letter appears to be Lady Walgrave, widow of Sir Richard Walgrave, knight. [He appears to have been a very general but unsuccessful wooer.]

[2] [Fenn translates *whereas* here by *if*. We have already noticed the indiscriminate use of *where* and *whereas*; by attending to this, and altering Fenn's punctuation, the sentence is perfectly clear, and justifies his own praise of the style.]

wooers as ye be both should speed well, but if (*unless*) ye love truly.[1]

Item, as for Stocton's daughter, she shall be wedded in haste to Skeerne, as she told herself to my silkmaid,[2] which maketh part of such as she shall wear, to whom she broke (*opened*) her heart, and told her that she should have had Master Paston, and my maid wend (*thought*) it had been I that she spoke of; and with more (*moreover*) that the same Master Paston come where she was with twenty men, and would have taken her away; I told my maid that she lied of me, and that I never spoke with her in my life, nor that I would not wed her to have with her three thousand marks (2000*l.*)

Item, as for Eberton's daughter, my brother Edmond saith that he heard never more speech thereof since your departing, and that ye would that he should not break nor do nothing therein but if (*unless*) it came of their beginning.

Item, I had answer from my lord[3] that he is my special good lord, and that by writing; and as for Berney he set him in his own wages for my sake, and that whensoever I come to Calais I shall find all thing there as I would have it, and rather better than it was heretofore.

Item, the king came to this town on Wednesday; as for the French embassade[4] (*embassy*) that is here, they come not in the king's presence by likelihood, for men say that the chief of them is he that poisoned both the Duke of Berry and the Duke of Calabria.

Item, there was never more likelihood that the king should go over sea this next year than was now.

I pray you remember that I may have the pewter vessel hither by the next carrier by the latter end of this week.

Item, I pray you remember so that I may have the books by the same time, which my mother said she would send me by the next carrier.

Written at London, the Sunday the 20th of November, in the 14th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

London, Sunday,
20th of November, 1474.
14 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXLIX.—(LXII. vol. ii. p. 171.)

We are in this letter brought acquainted with the manners of the time. The lady shows herself a woman of honour, and above giving hope when she meant not to encourage the addresses of J. Paston. She was the widow of Sir Richard Walgrave, knight, a Yorkist, who was with the Earl of Kent at the taking of the town of Coquet and the isle of Rhée; he died young, and was succeeded by his brother Sir Thomas Walgrave. [Another unsuccessful attempt by poor John Paston.]

To John Paston, Esq.

BROTHER, I recommend me to you; letting you weet that I have, like as I promised you, I have done my devoir to know my Lady Walgrave's stomach (*resolution*), which, as God help me, and to be plain to you, I find in her no matter nor cause that I might take comfort of.

[1] [This is a very pleasant and good-humoured bit of sarcasm. Sir John seems always to have a pretty correct conception of the characters of those he addresses.]

[2] A person who made gowns of silk, &c. for both men and women, as appears from the manner in which she is here mentioned.

[3] I am not certain whether the Duke of Norfolk is here meant, or Lord Hastings the then governor of Calais.

[4] For the better understanding of this curious anecdote, which reflects honour on King Edward both as a sovereign prince and a man, it will be necessary to inform the reader that, in 1472, Lewis XI., king of France, finding himself drawn into a war with the Duke of Burgundy in order to bring about a marriage between his brother Charles, Duke of Berry and Guienne, and Mary the daughter and heir of that duke, employed proper persons to destroy his brother, and by that means to extricate him from these troubles. The death of the Duke of Berry was effected by a slow poison, of which he died in May, 1472, aged about 26 years. Mary, the richest heiress of her time, was born in 1457, and by her father, the Duke of Burgundy, was promised in marriage to various potentates, and amongst the rest, to Nicholas of Anjou, Duke of Calabria and Lorrain. This prince died in August, 1473, aged about 25, here said by poison administered by the same hand that took off the Duke of Berry.

She will in no wise receive nor keep your ring with her, and yet I told her that she should not be anything bound thereby; but that I knew by your heart of old that I wist well ye would be glad to forbear the levest (*dearest*) thing that ye had in the world, which might be daily in her presence, that should cause her once on a day to remember you; but it would not be, she would not thereby, as she said, put you nor keep you in any comfort thereby.

And moreover she prayed me that I should never take labour more herein, for she would hold her to such answer as she had given you tofore; wherewith she thought both ye and I would have held us content, had (*it*) not been (*for*) the words of her sister Genevieve.

When I understood all this, and that over night she bade her that went between her and me bid me bring with me her muskball[1] which, &c., then I after all this asked if she were displeased with me for it, and she said, nay.

Then I told her that I had not sent it you, for sin of my soul; and so I told her all, how I had written to you why that I would not send it you, because I wist well ye should have sleeped the worse; but now, I told her, as God help me, that I would send it you, and give you mine advice not to hope over much on her, which is over hard an hearted lady for a young man to trust unto; which I thought that for all my words ye could not nor would not do for all mine advice.

Yet againwards she is not displeased, nor forbid me not but that ye should have the keeping of her muskball; wherefore do ye with it as ye like; I would it had done well by good, I spake for you so that in faith I trow I could not say so well again; wherefore I send you herewith your ring and the unhappy muskball; also make ye matter of it hereafter as ye can, I am not happy to woo neither for myself nor none other.

I told her all the process of the Lord Howard[2] and of your grounds as I could, all helps not.

(*Here follows some displeasure at his uncle William's proceedings in matters between them, &c. of no consequence.*)

I hear no word of my vessel nor of my books; I marvel. No more. Written at London, the 11th day of December, in the 14th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, *knight.*

London,
Sunday, 11th of December,
1474. 14 E. IV.

LETTER CCCL.—(LXIII. vol. ii. p. 175.)

Though this letter has no signature, yet it is written by Sir John Paston, knight. The business mentioned in the first part of this letter, on which Sir John was so anxious to attend the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk, was relative to Caister, &c.; and his journey into Flanders, to purchase horse and harness, was in consequence of the treaty entered into between Edward and the Duke of Burgundy, which would be productive of a war with France.

To the right worshipful John Paston, Esq., at Norwich, or to his mother, Margaret Paston, in his absence, in haste.

I RECOMMEND me to you, praying you heartily, that I may have weeting (*knowledge*) when that my Lord and Lady of Norfolk shall be at London, and how long they shall tarry there, and in especial my Lord of Norfolk; for upon their coming to London were it for me to be guided; nevertheless I would be sorry to come there but if (*unless*) I needs must. I think it would be to you over irksome a labour to solicit the matters atween them and me, but if (*unless*) I were there myself; wherefore, if ye think it be convenient that I come thither, I pray you send me word as hastily as ye may, and by what time ye think most convenient that I should be there; and of all such comfort as ye find or hear of the towardness thereof, and when also that ye shall be there yourself; for

[1] This muskball, or ball of perfume, seems to have been taken from Lady Walgrave by Sir John Paston in a jesting manner, to send to his brother as a present from her.

[2] He was afterwards Duke of Norfolk.

it is so that as to-morrow I purpose to ride into Flanders to purvey me of horse and harness; percase (*perchance*) I shall see the siege of Nuys [1] ere I come again if I have time; wherefore, if I so do, by likelihood it will be a fourteen days ere I be here again; and after, as I hear from you and others thereupon, that at the next passage, and God will, I purpose to come to London ward: God send me good speed; in chief for the matter above written; and secondly, for to appoint with the king and my lord for such retinue as I should have now in these wars into France; wherefore I pray you in Norfolk and other places, commune with such as ye think likely for you and me that are disposed to take wages in gentlemen's houses and elsewhere, so that we may be the more ready when that need is; nevertheless at this hour I would be glad to have with me daily three or four more than I have, such as were likely; for I lack of my retinue that I have near so many.

I pray you send me some tidings, such as ye hear, and how that my brother Edmund doth; for as for tidings here there be but few, save that the siege lasteth still by the Duke of Burgundy afore Nuys, and the emperor[2] hath besieged also, not far from thence, a castle and another town in like wise, wherein the duke's men be.

And also the French king, men say, is coming nigh to the water of Somme with 4000 spears, and some men trow (*think*) that he will, at the day of breaking of truce,[3] or else before, set upon the duke's countries here.

When I hear more I shall send you more tidings.

The king's ambassadors Sir Thomas Montgomery and the Master of the Rolls[4] be coming homeward from Nuys,[5] and as for me I think that I should be sick but if (*unless*) I see it.

Sir John of Parre and William Berkeley came this way to Flanders ward to buy them horse and harness, and (*I*) made Sir J. Parre (*as*) good cheer as I could for your sake; and he told me that ye made him haulte (*high*) cheer, &c. at Norwich. No more. Written at Calais, the 17th day of January, in the 14th year of Edward IV.

Calais, Tuesday, 17th of January,
1474. 14 E. IV.

LETTER CCCLI.—(XVII. vol. v. p. 83.)

[MARGARET PASTON writes to her son John again about money, complaining that Robert Clere had not been paid 20*l.* lent by him and his mother to Sir John; she supposes that William Paston ought to have paid it, "for he hath a surety for all that and more," but he had refused unless on the delivery of some pledges of Margaret Paston's then in the hands of Clere. Margaret Paston requests her son to ascertain "in haste," and let her "understand how it is," "for I were loath to lose my pledges; I wot it well your good uncle would be in possession with good will, but I would not so." She next alludes to other matters of family discontent. Agnes Paston had been for some time living in London, and Margaret says "Remember me to your grandam; I would she were here in Norfolk, as well at ease as ever I saw her, and as little ruled by her son as ever she was, and then I would hope that we all should fare the better for her." This son was no doubt the "uncle William" so often alluded to, of whom the rest of the family seem to have been very willing to borrow money, and very much surprised at being expected to pay; whether or not he was aware of this

[1] [Nuys is a town in Germany, in the government circle of Cologne, in Rhenish Prussia, on the west side of the Rhine.]

[2] Frederick III. of Austria, emperor of Germany.

[3] This truce between Lewis XI., king of France, and the Duke of Burgundy, was to be at an end in the beginning of the summer in 1475.

[4] Dr. John Morton, afterwards Bishop of Ely, Lord Chancellor, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Cardinal.

[5] The duke persisted in this siege, though the emperor with a large force was in the neighbourhood, much to his own disadvantage, as it prevented his meeting the King of England; and at last the siege was raised on certain conditions.

family defect, he seems to have been by no means wanting in a due regard to his own advantage in all these bargains, and to have considered all that was legal as just and right. From money-lending Margaret Paston passes to religious matters, and one of her reasons for desiring a license for her chapel appears to point to the evil of non-residence even in those days. She says, "I would ye should speak with my Lord of Norwich, and assay to get a license of him that I may have the sacrament here in the chapel, because it is far to the church, and I am sickly, and the parson is often out." She was then residing at Mawteby, whence this letter is dated, Saturday, Jan. 29, 1474. In a sort of post-script she mentions a curious circumstance connected with the currency. Fenn considers it to allude to the alloy oxydising, but this could hardly be the case to an extent sufficient to prevent the money from passing. At least we have never seen specimens of any such coin. She says:—"My cousin Robert told me that there was more than 7*l.* of the money that was paid him that was right on [*thoroughly*] rusty, and he could not have it changed: he was ungoodly [*not well*] served therein." We rather think it means coin of an early date, not at that time commonly current.]

LETTER CCCLII.—(XVIII. vol. v. p. 87.)

[This letter is written from Norwich on the same day as the last, by Margaret Paston to her other son, Sir John, and contains nearly a repetition of the money affairs mentioned in the previous letter. Edward IV. had been recently exacting a benevolence, as it was termed (a task or tax, as the writers of these letters call it), in the city and county, and the withdrawal of such large sums of money are stated to have had a most depressing effect upon prices. She says:—"As for Sporle wood, before the king's coming into Norfolk I might have had chapmen to have bought it a gret (*in the gross*) for twelve score marks (160*l.*), and now there will no man buy it a gret, because of the great good (*large sums*) that the people is laid to [*assessed*] for the king; wherefore we are about to retail it as well as we may * * * * As for your barley in this country, it cannot be sold above 10*d.* or 11*d.* that is the greatest price of barley here, and but it be at a better price I purpose for to do it malt (*malt it*) * * * Malt is sold here but for 13*d.*, and wheat 2*s.* or 26*d.* at this time, and oats 12*d.* There is none outload suffered to go out of this country as yet; the king hath commanded that there should none go out of this land. I fear me we shall have right a strange world; God amend it, when his will is." The quantity worth the above-named prices was no doubt the comb, equal to two bushels, a term still frequently used in reckoning in the eastern counties. The low price is confirmed by the list of prices, in Eden's 'State of the Poor;' in Appendix, page xi. he gives the price of oats in 1475 as 1*s.* 10*d.* per quarter. The attempt to regulate prices by preventing traffic seems to have been constant, and always to have been attended with suffering. She concludes with an account of the books so earnestly desired by Sir John. "As for the books that ye desired to have of Sir James's, the best of all and the fairest is claimed; nor it is not in his inventory. I shall assay to get it for you an I may; the price of these other books, besides that, is 20*s.* 6*d.* the which I send ye a bill of. If ye like by the price of them, and ye will have them, send me word."]

LETTER CCCLIII.—(XIX. vol. v. p. 93.)

[Sir J. Paston writes from Calais, Sunday, Feb. 5, 1474-5, to "his brother John Paston, or to his uncle William Paston in Warwick Lane, or to Edmund Paston at the George at Paul's Wharf," explaining that he is prevented from leaving Calais to urge his suit respecting Caister, and entreating of all or any of them to do all for him that they possibly can. The details are wholly uninteresting.]

LETTER CCCLIV.—(XX. vol. v. p. 97.)

[In this letter Sir John Paston answers his mother's letter (ccclii.) Having now got a price fixed on the books, he seems indifferent about them; he probably wished his offer as to paying in prayers to have been accepted. "As for the books that were Sir James's, God have his soul! [he continues to pray] I think best that they be still with you, till that I speak with you myself. My mind is not now most upon books." The rest of the letter consists of details as to his money transactions. It is dated Calais, Feb. 22, 1474-5.]

LETTER CCCLV.—(LXIV. vol. ii. p. 179.)

[This letter is written on the back of Letter cccl., from J. Paston, and is a curious instance of the uncertainty of the transmission of correspondence. If it is meant that she had received no letter since St. Matthew's even, she had not yet had that of Nov. 20 (Letter cccxlvii.), a period of nearly four months. But she may mean that she had written this letter on St. Matthias' even, but could not send it, as she adds, "if I might have had a messenger ere this time, I had sent it you." She could scarcely have thought it long not to have *received* a letter since Matthias' even, a period of only ten days. We are inclined to think she alludes to her own writing.]

Mrs. Margaret Paston, to her son John Paston.

John Paston, I send you God's blessing and mine; letting you weet, that I had none ere this letter than on Saint Matthew's even;[1] if I might have had a messenger ere this time I had sent it you; I con you thank for the letter that ye sent to my cousin Calthorp and me of the tidings; I would ye should do so more. As ye may remember that I spake to you for the 20*l.* for my cousin Clere, speak to your uncle thereof, and send me an answer thereof in haste.

And for the licence[2] that I spake to you, for to have the sacrament in my chapel, if ye cannot get it of the Bishop of Norwich, get it of the Bishop of Canterbury, for that is most sure for all places.

God keep you. Written on Midlent Sunday.

Midlent Sunday,
5th of March, 1474.
15 E. IV.

LETTER CCCLVI.—(XXI. vol. v. p. 103.)

[A negotiation for a marriage. Fenn says that the gentleman was John Berney, of Reedham, Esq., and that the negotiation was successful, as he married Alice, daughter of Richard Southwell, Esq. of Wood-rising in Norfolk, the writer of this letter to John Paston, Esq. We give all but the complimentary part of the letter. "And, cousin, in the matter that it liked you to remember me in, both to my worship and pleasure, I fear me that neither my poor daughter nor poor purse can nor may be to his pleasure; would God either might; and I should take me right near to his pleasure, saving myself, I ensure you by my troth; and how to understand his disposition and pleasure therein, I see no mean as thus advised, but if it might please you by your wisdom to attempt it farther, as ye seem most convenient, and thereupon to be guided by your good advice, as the case shall require, wherein ye shall bind me hereafter to do that may be your pleasure to my power, and yet with no better will than I have had, so God help me, who have you ever in his keeping, and send you your heart's desire to his pleasure; and if it please you to remember farther in the premises, I trust ye shall lose no labour on my poor part; howbeit I fear me sore, as I began, both of my poor daughter and purse." Dated Wood-rising, March 26, about 1475.]

[1] [St. Matthew's anniversary is September 21. St. Matthias's (in original "Sent Matheus") is Feb. 23.]

[2] We are here informed that the archbishop's licence was preferable to that of the diocesan, and seems to have had greater privileges annexed to it.

LETTER CCCLVII.—(XXII. vol. v. p. 105.)

[MARGARET Paston again writes to Sir John, chiefly details about money matters; money, she says, is very scarce; "the king goeth so near us in this country, both to poor and rich, that I wot not how we shall live, but if the world amend: God amend it, when his will is. I can neither sell corn nor cattle to no good preve (*profit.*) Malt is here but at 10*d.* a comb; wheat, a comb, 28*d.*; oats, a comb, 10*d.*; and thereof is but little to get here at this time." She says Peacock, apparently his steward, hath paid for him two tasks (*subsidies*) at this time. Her ideas of soldiership are remarkably clear for a female, and her recommendation to Sir John, who had served, good. "If your brethren go over the sea, advise them as ye think best for their safe-guard, for some of them be but young soldiers, and wot full little what it is to be as a soldier, nor for to endure to do as a soldier should do." The letter is dated Mawteby, Tuesday, May 23, 1475.]

LETTER CCCLVIII.—(XXIII. vol. v. p. 111.)

[SIR John Paston writes to his brother Edmund, that a vacancy has occurred at Calais, and that he may "come and live like a gentleman," if he can manage to obtain the appointment; "else," he adds, "if ye dispose you to abide in England, since it is so that the Bishop of Lincoln is chancellor, his service is the meeter for you, he is next neighbour to Norfolk of any estate: God send you some good ward of his." Place-hunting, from a place under the government to one under a private nobleman, seems to have been the general pursuit, and by no means incompatible with the character of a gentleman. The letter is dated Calais, Tuesday, June 13th, 1475.]

LETTER CCCLIX.—(LXV. vol. ii. p. 181.)

The abbey of St. Benuet at Holm was situated in the parish of Horning in Norfolk, in the midst of a now dreary and solitary marsh, not likely to be chosen for the wholesomeness of the air. The remains of this once grand and mitred abbey are now very small, standing in the midst of a level marsh, intersected by a great number of almost stagnant ditches. I am, however, informed by a most respectable gentleman, whose seat is in the neighbourhood, that many of the towns surrounding this spot are remarkable for the longevity of their inhabitants. If such is the effect of this air now, perhaps in the flourishing state of the abbey it might be still more salubrious. [1787. It is now much improved.]

To the right worshipful Sir John Paston, Knight, in haste.

RIGHT well-beloved son, &c. (*The chief part of this letter relates to Sir John Paston's private affairs, his rents and lands, and it informs him that William Jenney had entered into Holm-hall, in Filby, in the right and title of his daughter-in-law, which was Boys' daughter, &c.*)

As for tidings here in this country, we have none but that the country is barren of money; and that my Lady of York[1] and all her household is here at Saint Bennet's, and purposed to abide there still till the king come from beyond the sea,[2] and longer if she like the air there, as it is said.

I think right long till I hear some tidings for you[3] and from your brethren. I pray God send you, and all your company good speed in your journeys, to his pleasure and to your worships and profits.

Written at Mawteby, on Saint Laurence's even, the 15th year of the reign of King Edward the IV.

By your MOTHER.

Mawteby, Thursday,
10th of August, 1475.
15 E. IV.

[1] Cecily, Duchess of York, daughter of Ralph Nevile, Earl of Westmoreland, was the widow of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and mother of King Edward IV. &c. She died in 1495, and was buried near her husband in the college of Fotheringay.

[2] He was at this time in France.

[3] Quære, from?

LETTER CCCLX.—(XXIV. vol. v. p. 113.)

[Sir John Paston writes to his mother from Calais, and announces the conclusion of the journey to France of Edward IV. He had raised large sums in England to carry on a war against the French in alliance with the Duke of Burgundy, but the latter failing him, and, it is said, his ministers being bribed by the French king, a peace for seven years was concluded, after a personal interview between the two monarchs at Pecquigni, where they met on a bridge across the Somme. It contains no other matter of interest, and to this there is a mere allusion. Dated Monday, Sept. 11, 1475.]

LETTER CCCLXI.—(XXV. vol. v. p. 117.)

[John Paston writes to his brother Sir John of the further progress towards the recovery of Caister. He says the king has promised there shall be no delay beyond the 3rd Nov. of the present year; that the Duke of Norfolk's council acknowledge his right; and that "my lady sweareth, and so doth Barnard on her behalf, that she would as fain ye had it as any body; notwithstanding she said not so to me since I came home, for I spake not to her but once since I saw you last." He complains of illness occasioned by taking cold, both at Calais and since his return home; and says "but I was never so well armed for the war, as I have now armed me for cold; wherefore I advise you take example by me if it happen you to be sick, as ye were when I was at Calais, in any wise keep you warm. I ween Harry Wodehouse nor James Arblaster wear never at once so many coats, hose and boots as I do, or else by God we had gone therefore; what we shall yet I cannot say, but I bear me bold on two days amending." Rather a short time to recommend his experience so confidently. Dated Norwich, Tuesday, Oct. 10, 1475.]

LETTER CCCLXII.—(LXVI. vol. ii. p. 183.)

This letter records a most curious conversation between the king, the Duke of Norfolk, and Sir William Brandon, relative to Caister. Sir William Brandon was father of Charles Brandon, afterwards created Duke of Suffolk.

To Sir John Paston, Knight, lodged at the George, by Paul's Wharf, in London.

After all duties of recommendation, please it you to understand that I have spoken with my lady since I wrote to you last; and she told me that the king had no such words to my lord for Caister as ye told me; but she saith that the king asked my lord at his departing from Calais how he would deal with Caister, and my lord answered never a word.

Sir W. Brandon stood by, and the king asked him what my lord would do in that matter; saying that he had commanded him before time to move my lord with that matter, and Sir W. Brandon gave the king to answer that he had done so; then the king asked Sir W. B. what my lord's answer was to him, and Sir W. B. told the king that my lord's answer was that the king should as soon have his life as that place; and then the king asked my lord whether he said so or not, and my lord said, yea. And the king said not one word again, but turned his back, and went his way; but my lady told me and (*if*) the king had spoken any word in the world after that to my lord, my lord would not have said him nay.

And I have given my lady warning that I will do my lord no more service; but ere we parted she made me to make her (*a*) promise, that I should let her have knowledge ere I

fastened myself in any other service; and so I departed, and see her not since, nor nought purpose to do till I speak with you.

I pray you bring home some hats with you, or and (*if*) ye come not hastily send me one, &c. and I shall pay you for it a comb (*of*) oats[1] when ye come home.

My mother would fain have you at Mawteby; she rode thither, out of Norwich on Saturday last past to purvey your lodging ready against your coming.

I have been right sick again since I wrote to you last,[2] and this same day have I been passing sick; it will not out of my stomach by no mean, I am undone, I may not eat half enough when I have most hunger, I am so well dieted, and yet it will not be. God send you heele (*health*), for (*I*) have none three days together, do the best I can.

Written at Norwich, the Monday next before Saint Simon and Jude,[3] in the 15th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON.

Norwich,
Monday, 23rd of October,
1475. 15 E. IV.

LETTER CCCLXIII.—(LXVII. vol. ii. p. 187.)

[This letter contains an account of the death of the Duke of Norfolk, and of his funeral.] John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, &c., was retained by Edward IV. to serve him in his wars in France in 1473; he married Elizabeth, daughter of John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury, and died suddenly at his castle of Framlingham on the 17th of January, 1475, 15 E. IV., and was buried in the abbey church of Thetford in Norfolk. He left an only daughter and heir, Anne, married in her early age to Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, who dying without issue, the great possessions and honours of this noble family came to Sir John Howard, knight, Lord Howard, whose mother was a sister and co-heir of Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk. [Though Sir John says the Duke's death occurred "not in the most happy season" for him, he instantly took possession of Caister, and succeeded in retaining it.]

This letter has no direction, but it is written either to John Paston, Esq., or Margaret Paston.

LIKE it you to weet, that, not in the most happy season for me, it is so fortuned that, whereas my Lord of Norfolk, yesterday being in good health, this night died about midnight, wherefore it is for all that loved him to do and help now that that may be to his honour and weal to his soul; and it is so that this country is not well purveyed of cloth of gold for the covering for his body and herse; wherefore every man helping to his power, I put the council of my lord in comfort that I hoped to get one for that day, if it were so that it be not broken or put to other use; wherefore please it you to send me word if it be so that ye have, or can come by, the cloth of tissue that I bought for our father's tomb, and I undertake it shall be saved again for you unhurt at my peril; I deem hereby to get great thanks and great assistance in time to come; and that either Sym or Mother Brown may deliver it to me to-morrow by seven of the clock.

Item, as for other means I have sent my servant Richard Toring to London, which I hope shall bring me good tidings again, and within four days I hope to see you.

Written on Wednesday, the 17th day of January, in the 15th year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

Framlingham,
Wednesday, 17th of January, 1475.
15 E. IV.

LETTER CCCLXIV.—(XXVI. vol. v. p. 121.)

[JOHN PASTON writes to his brother that his entering so quickly upon Caister has been very ill taken, "insomuch that some say that ye tendered little my lord's death, inasmuch

[1] In 1475, a comb of oats sold for 11*d*., we have therefore the value of a hat in this reign. [The price of "hattes of wolle" in 1480, varied from xiid. to viiid. each; while bonnets, in the same entry, are set down at iis. vid. and iiis. each. See Sir N. H. Nicolas's 'Wardrobe Expenses of Edward IV.' p. 199.]

[2] [The extra clothing appears to have been not so efficacious as he had anticipated.]

[3] 28th of October.

as ye would so soon enter upon him after his decease, without advice and assent of my lord's council; wherefore it is thought here by such as be your friends in my lord's house, that if my lady have once the grant of the wardship of the child,[1] that she will occupy Caister with other lands, and lay the default on your unkind hastiness of entry without her assent; wherefore in any wise get you a patent of the king ensealed before her's, an ye may by any mean possible." We shall see that this advice was successfully followed. The rest of the letter is about raising of money for John Paston, who it appears was going again to Calais, as he requests his brother to get him excused from keeping a horse there, because hay was so dear. Dated Norwich, Tuesday, Jan. 23, 1475.]

LETTER CCCLXV.—(LXVIII. vol. ii. p. 191.)

I have given the whole of this letter as conveying to us some information relative to the ordinary transactions of the times. The anecdote of the Duke of York's marrying Anne, the daughter of the deceased Duke of Norfolk, depending on the duchess (who appears to have been left with child at the duke's decease) not having a son, is I believe both new and curious, and shows us that alliances as well in those days as at present, were estimated according to the possessions and pecuniary advantages they brought with them.

To John Paston, Esq., at Norwich, be this delivered.

I RECOMMEND me to you, letting you weet that I was informed by Richard Radle that one Scarlett, that was under-sheriff to Hastings,[2] would sue to me on your behalf, for that ye were displeased with a return of nichil[3] upon you in the said Hastings' time; wherefore Richard Radle thought that the said Scarlett would be glad to give a noble (6*s.* 8*d.*) or a rial (10*s.*) for a saddle to amends, so that ye would cease and stop the bill which ye intend to put into the court against his master Hastings. Wherefore the said Scarlett came to me, and prayed me to help in the same, and so I have done my devoir to feel of him the most he can find in his stomach to depart with to please you, and in conclusion I trow he shall give you a doublet cloth of silk, price 20*s.* or thereabout; which, upon such answer as I hear from you, I deem that Bishop the attorney shall, if I conclude with him on your behalf, pay in money or otherwise to whom that ye will assign here.

I shall by the means of Radle weet at whose suit it was taken out; I deem it something done by craft, by the means of them that have entresse (*interest*) in your land to the intent to noise it theirs, or to make you past shame of the selling thereof.

Item, I have received a letter from you writen on Tuesday last.

Item, where that (*whereas*) some towards my Lady of Norfolk noise that I did unkindly to send so hastily to Caister as I did, there is no discreet person that so thinketh; for if my lord had been as kind to me as he might have been, and according to such heart and service as my grandfather, my father, yourself, and I, have ought and done to my Lords of Norfolk that dead been, and yet (*even*) if I had wedded his daughter yet must I have done as I did; and moreover, if I had had any deeming of my lord's death four hours ere he died, I must needs but if (*unless*) I would be known a fool have entered it the hour before his decease; but in effect they that in that matter have always meant unkindly to me, they feign that rumour against me; but there is none that meant truly to him that dead is that would be sorry that I had it, and in especial such as love his soul.

Item, where(*as*) it is deemed that my lady would hereafter be the rather mine heavy (*unkind*) lady for that dealing, I think that she

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[1] [The duchess had just been delivered of a daughter, the Lady Anne, mentioned in the preceding letter.]

[2] John Hastings was sheriff of Norfolk the preceding year.

[3] Nihils, or Nichils, are issues which the sheriff that is apposed in the Exchequer says are *nothing worth* and ileviable through the insufficiency of the parties from whom due.

is too reasonable so to be, for I did it not unwist (*unknown*) to her council; there was no man thought that I should do otherwise, and as to say that I might have had my lady's advice and leave, I might have tarried yet ere I could have spoken with her, or yet have had any body to have moved her there on my behalf, as ye wot I did what I could; moreover I tarried by the advice of Sir Robert Wingfield three days there, for that he put me in comfort that the Lord Howard,[1] and his brother Sir John, should have come to Norwich, at whose coming he doubted not but that I should have a good direction taken for me in that matter; they lay to me unkindness for overkindness.

Item, as for my matter here, it was this day before all the lords of the council, and among them all it was not thought that in my sending of Wheatley thither, immediately after the decease of the duke, that I dealt unkindly or unfittingly, but that I was more unreasonably dealt with; wherefore let men deem what they will, greatest clerks are not always wisest men; but I hope hastily to have one way in it or other.

Item, I wend to have found a gown of mine here, but it come home the same day that I come out, brought by Harry Berker, loader (*carrier*). I would in all haste possible have that same gown of puke[2] furred with white lamb.

Item, I would have my long russet gown of the French russet in all haste, for I have no gown to go in here.

Item, I pray you recommend me to my mother, and let us all pray God send my Lady of Norfolk a son, for upon that resteth much matter; for if the king's son[3] marry my lord's daughter, the king would that his son should have a fair place in Norfolk though he should give me two times the value in other land as I am done to weet (*informed*). I pray you send me word of my lady's speed as soon as ye can.

Item, as for Bowen I shall feel him (*sound his inclination*), and should have done though ye had not sent.

Item, there is offered me a good marriage for my sister Anne, Skipwith's son and heir of Lincolnshire, a man (*of*) 500 or 600 marks (*between* 300*l.* *and* 400*l.*) by the year.

No more. Written at London the 27th day of January, in the 15th year of Edward IV.

Item, my Lady of Exeter[4] is dead, and it was said, that both the old Duchess of Norfolk,[5] and the Countess of Oxford,[6] were dead, but it is not so yet.

Item, I shall remember Calais both for horse and all, &c.

London, Saturday,
27th of January, 1475. 15 E. IV.

LETTER CCCLXVI.—(XXVII. vol. v. p. 125.)

[John Paston writes to Lord Hastings in this letter, recommending to him a person "meet to be clerk of your kitchen." The description of him is minute, and the qualifications curious enough for one filling such an office. "This man is mean of [*of middle*] stature, young enough, well witted, well mannered; a goodly young man on horse and foot; he is well

[1] Afterwards Duke of Norfolk.

[2] Puck or pouk is an old Gothic word signifying the devil, see Pierce Plowman, Spenser, &c. Hence puke became synonymous to black, or dark gray, and consequently might be used for mourning. In Barrett's Alveare, 1580, it is explained as a colour between russet and black, and is rendered in Latin by pullus. On Good Friday the lord mayor and aldermen always wore their *puke gowns*.

[3] Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, second son of King Edward IV. in January, 1477, married Anne, sole daughter and heir of John Mowbray, late Duke of Norfolk.

[4] Anne, daughter of Richard Duke of York, sister of Edward IV., and widow of Henry Holland, the last Duke of Exeter, her first husband; she died 14th of January, 1475, and lies buried with Sir Thomas St. Leger, knight, her second husband, in a private chapel at Windsor.

[5] Ellenor, only daughter of William Bourchier, Earl of Ewe, in Normandy, and widow of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.

[6] Margaret, daughter of Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury, and wife of John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, now a prisoner in the castle of Hammes, in Picardy: or it may refer to Elizabeth, widow of the late Earl of Oxford, and daughter and heir of Sir John Howard, knight.

spoken in English, meetly well in French, and very perfect in Flemish; he can write and read; his name is Richard Stratton, his mother is Mistress Grame of Calais; and when I had showed him mine intent, he was agreeable and very glad if that it might please your lordship to accept him into your service." He also mentions having procured two other persons for his lordship's service, but these seem to be intended to serve in a military capacity. The letter is dated Norwich, Saturday, March 2, 1475-6.]

LETTER CCCLXVII.—(XXVIII. vol. v. p. 131.)

[Sir John Paston in this letter announces to his brother or mother his having crossed the sea to Calais, and being safe and well at Guisnes. He had gone with the governor of Calais, Lord Hastings, and informs his brother that a Master Fitzwalter intended to return to England in order to settle at Attleborough, and how extremely, well-disposed the said Fitzwalter was toward him. This Fitzwalter was son of John Ratcliffe, Lord Fitzwalter in right of his wife, and who was killed at Ferrybridge in 1460. Master Fitzwalter was himself summoned to parliament as Lord Fitzwalter in 1485, but joining in the rebellion of Perkin Warbeck, he was taken prisoner, and confined in Calais; he attempted to escape from thence, but was retaken and beheaded. The letter is dated Tuesday, March 12, 1475-6.]

LETTER CCCLXVIII.—(XXIX. vol. v. p. 133.)

[The first part of this letter, which is from John Paston in Norwich to his mother, dated Tuesday, March, 1475-6, informs her that "my lady," probably the Duchess of Norfolk, had been inquiring whether she would be present at her accouchement, and recommends that she should accede to her wishes as it might be advantageous. In the latter part two curious subjects are noticed. He says:—"Here was here with me yesterday, a man from the prior of Bromholm, to let me have knowledge of the ill speech which is in the country now of new that the tomb [of his father] is not made, and also he saith that the cloth that lieth over the grave is all torn and rotten, and is not worth twopence, and he saith he hath patched it once or twice, wherefore the prior hath sent to you at the least to send thither a new cloth before Easter." The other subject—the inability to procure tiles in a town like Norwich,—is a remarkable instance of the want of progress in manufactures. He writes, "Master Stoley prayeth you, for God's sake, and ye will do no alms of tile, that he might borrow some of you till he may buy some and pay you again; for one, the fairest chamber of the fryars, standeth half uncovered for default of tile, for here is none to get for no money." Dated Tuesday, March, 1475-6.]

LETTER CCCLXIX.—(LXIX. vol. ii. p. 199.)

This letter furnishes us with a curious anecdote relative to Earl Rivers, who, we may suppose, had been on a pilgrimage to Rome; for Caxton tells us, that he was "sometime full vertuously occupied in goyng of pilgrimagis:" he likewise procured "greet and large indulgance and grace from our holy fader the pope." But it is plain he had not procured a papal protection from robbers.

To Mrs. Margaret Paston, at Norwich, or her son John Paston, Esq., and to each of them.

I recommend me to you; like it you to weet, that I am not certain yet whether my lord and I shall come into England the week before Easter, or else the week after Easter;

wherefore, mother, I beseech you to take no displeasure with me for my long tarrying, for I must do none otherwise for (*fear of*) displeasing of my lord.

I was nothing glad of this journey if I might goodly have chosen; nevertheless, saving that ye have cause to be displeased with me for the matter of Koketts, I am else right glad, for I hope that I am far more in favour with my lord than I was tofore.

Item, I send you, brother John, a letter herewith, which was brought hither to Calais from the George at Paul's Wharf; I deem it cometh from my brother Walter.

Item, if ye intend hitherwards, it were well done that ye hygthed (*hied*) you, for I suppose that my lord will take the view of all his retinue here, now before his departing; and I think that he would be better content with your coming now than another time; do as ye think best, and as ye may.

Item, where(*as*) Master Fitzwalter made me to write to you to advise you to tarry, I remit that to your discretion.

As for tidings here we hear from all the world; first, the Lord Rivers was at Rome right well and honourably, and other lords of England, as the Lord Hurmonde,[1] the Lord Scrope,[2] and at their departing, twelve miles on this half Rome, the Lord Rivers was robbed of all his jewels and plate, which was worth 1000 marks[3] (666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) or better, and is returned to Rome for a remedy.

Item, the Duke of Burgundy[4] hath conquered Lorrain, and Queen Margaret[5] shall not now by likelihood have it; wherefore the French king cherisheth her but easily[6] (*slightly, little*); but after this conquest of Lorrain, the duke took great courage to go upon the land of the Swiss to conquer them, but they berded (*confronted*) him at an unset (*unlooked for*) place, and hath distressed him, and hath slain the most part of his vanward, and won all his ordnance and artillery, and moreover all stuff that he had in his host, except men and horse, that fled not; but they rode that night twenty miles; and so the rich salets,[7] helmets, garters, nowches[8] gelt (*gold*), and all is gone, with tents, pavilions, and all, and so men deem his pride is abated; men told him that they were froward carles, but he would not believe it, and yet men say that he will to them again; God speed them both.

Item, Sir John Myddleton took leave of the duke to sport him, but he is set in prison at Brussels.

I pray you send me some word, if ye think likely that I may enter Caister when I will, by the next messenger.

Written at Calais, in reasonable health of body and soul, I thank God, the 21st day of March, in the sixteenth year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

Calais, Thursday.
21st of March, 1475. 16 E. IV.

LETTER CCCLXX.—(XXX. vol. v. p. 139.)

[JOHN PASTON writes from Norwich to his mother of his brother, Sir John, having suddenly departed for London to the king "for the surety of the manor of Caister." The cloth of gold, presented to the Duchess of Norfolk by Margaret Paston, it appears had

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[1] Quære, Lord Ormond?

[2] John Lord Scroop, of Bolton.

[3] Allowing for the difference of weight, and value of money between this and the present time, he lost to the amount of nearly 4000*l.*

[4] During the preceding autumn the Duke of Burgundy, having subdued the whole duchy of Lorrain, he now attacked the Swiss, and took a town called Granson just as a body of troops were arriving to its relief; these he went to meet as they came down the narrow passes of the mountains; when his army, being seized with a panic, fled, and left his baggage to be plundered by the enemy. Within a short time after this he besieged Morat, a small town near Bern, when a battle ensued in which he was totally routed.

[5] This queen had been lately delivered from her imprisonment in the Tower, to the French king, on his engaging to pay 50,000 crowns for her ransom.

[6] So in Letter xv., vol. i., p. 9, "I have but easy stuff of money," that is, *little store* of money.

[7] Light head-pieces.

[8] Embossed ornaments—chains—buckles, &c.

been returned; and Sir John says: "Sir Robert Wingfield offered me yesterday twenty marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) for it; but I wot well ye shall have more for it, if ye will sell it." It will be seen from a subsequent letter that it was to be sold in order to purchase a cloth for her husband's tomb, which we have already *seen* had been much neglected. The latter part of the letter alludes to some domestic matter, implying that the "hostess at Fritton," who had been rebuking "our chyldyr" for "playing wanton," "hath gotten her such a thing to play with, that our other chyldyr shall have leave to sport them. God send her joy of it." The letter is dated Sunday, May or *June*, 1476.]

LETTER CCCLXXI.—(XXXI. vol. v. p. 141.)

[In this letter, dated Norwich, May 6, 1476, J. Paston writes to his brother Sir John again on the old subject of marriage. He says: "I understand that Mistress Fitzwalter hath a sister, a maid, to marry; I trow, an ye entreated him, she might come into Christian men's hands. I pray you speak with Master Fitzwalter of that matter; and ye may tell him that since he will have my service, it were as good, an such a bargain might be made, that both she and I awaited on him and my mistress his wife, at our own costs, as I alone to await on him at his cost, for then he should be sure that I should not be flitting an I had such a quarrel (*quarry*) to keep me at home; an I have his good will, it is none impossible to bring about." He had evidently not seen the lady, but he is constant to his old idea of *baryaining* his marriage.]

LETTER CCCLXXII.—(XXXII. vol. v. p. 145.)

[Sir John Paston writes from London to his mother or brother of his good success in having at length procured a decree for the restitution of the manor of Caister, which "now lacketh nothing but the privy seals, and writing to Master Colvill to avoid." He says, however, "that it shall cost me great money and hath cost me much labour; it is so that the king must have an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*), and other costs will draw forty marks (26*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*)." He adds that he shall "have much pain to get so much money," but hopes to accomplish it with the assistance of his uncle William, the resource in all straits. He lets us into an approximation of the real value of Caister with great naïveté, for he states that "the king would have bought it, but he was informed of the truth, and that it was not for a prince, and of the great price that I would sell it at, for that I might not forbear [*do without*] it, for [*though*] he should have paid two thousand marks (1333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*), or more if he had had it. Sir John seems to have been greatly excited by his success, for he addresses his brother as John Paston, knight, and he dates his letter on Monday the 26th of May, 1476, Monday being in fact the 29th.]

LETTER CCCLXXIII.—(XXXIII. vol. v. p. 149.)

[This letter contains a very curious notice of the *bargaining* in marriage. It is from Sir John in answer to one from that general wooer John Paston, who seems at length to have come to *terms* with some lady. Sir John objects to the proposed terms as improvident: "To be bound in five hundred marks (333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) I think it is too much; whereas I

felt [*understood*] by you ye should have with the gentlewoman but four hundred marks (266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*); nevertheless I agree; but ye shall understand that I will not be bound for you that ye shall make her jointure past 20*l.* by year, within a certain day limited, be it one year or two, that is the largest that ye may perform; for as for the manor of Sparham, my mother and ye accord not in your sayings; she will nought grant you therein while she liveth, save, as she saith to me, she hath granted you ten marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) by year till 40*l.* be paid, that is but six years; and after her death she will agree with good will, so that it may your proferment [*preferment—advantage*], that ye should have that manor in jointure with your wife to the longer liver of you both, paying ten marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) by year, so [imperfect in M.S.] or as she will that it shall be; therefore as for fifty marks (33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) jointure, I pray you bind me in no such clause; but if it be for 20*l.* by a reasonable day, and twenty marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) after the decease of my mother." He then goes on to say, "ye make you surer than I deem you be, for I deem that her friends will not be content with Bedingfield's surety, nor yours; I deem this matter will occupy longer leisure than ye deem for. Item, I remember that this money that she should have is not ready, but in the hands of merchants of the staple, which at a proof ye shall find per case so slack payers that ye might be deceived thereby; I know divers have lost money ere they could get their dues out of the staple." This is very curious, as the merchants of the staple have been generally considered as so opulent, that their security would have been undeniable. If the lady here in question was Mistress Fitzwalter's sister, the negotiation was fruitless, as the marriage was not effected. Sir John then reminds his brother of "the gown cloth of old camblet, I would have it home for my sister Ann, ye forgot it; I pray you send it home by the next messenger." He concludes his letter by saying, "Blessed be God, I have Caister at my will; God hold it better than it (*has*) done heretofore." Dated Sunday, June 30, 1476.]

LETTER CCCLXXIV.—(XXXIV. vol. v. p. 153.)

[MARGARET Paston being absent from home, though it is not said where, writes to her steward or some trusty domestic, about various matters, in all of which he has given her much satisfaction. The principal matter is of her son Walter. We must premise that she says some letters had miscarried that should have been brought by Thomas Holler's son. She then proceeds—"Wherefore I pray you heartily, if it be no disease to you, that ye will take the labour to bring Walter where he should be, and to purvey for him that he may be set in good and sad [*sober*] rule, for I were loath to lose him, for I trust to have more joy of him than I have of them that be older; though it be more cost to me to send you forth with him, I hold me pleased, for I wot well ye shall best purvey for him, and for such things as is necessary for him, than another should do, after mine intent. As for any horse to lead his gear, methink it were best that ye purvey at Cambridge, less than (*unless*) ye can get any carrier from thence to Oxford more hastily, and I marvel that the letters come not to me, and whether I may lay the default to the father or to the son thereof. And I will Walter should be coupled with a better than Holler's son is there, as he shall be; howbeit I would not that he should make never the less of him, by cause he is his countryman and neighbour; and also I pray you write a letter in my name to Walter, after that ye have known mine intent before this to him ward; so that he do well, learn well, and be of good rule and disposition, there shall nothing fail him that I may help with so that it be necessary to him; and bid him that he be not too hasty of taking of orders that should bind him, till that he be of twenty-four years of age or more, though he be counselled the contrary, for often rape (*haste*) rueth. I will love him better to be a good secular man than a lewd (*ignorant*) priest." The whole of this is said in good

sound sense and in most excellent feeling, and is alike honourable to her head and her heart, and creditable to her epistolary powers. The object of this good counsel and maternal care was her fourth son; he took his degree at Oxford in 1479, and died soon afterwards. The rest of her letter relates to the illness of her cousin Berneys, and here her good and right feelings are again displayed. She says, "And I pray you gif my white wine, or any of my waters, or any other thing that I have that is in your award, may do him comfort, let him have it, for I would be right sorry if anything should come to him but good; and for God's sake advise him to do make his will if it be not done, and to do well to my cousin his wife, and else it were pity." She afterwards remembers "that water of mint or water of millefoil (*yarrow—Achillæ'a millefólium*) were good for my cousin Berney to drink for to make him to brouke; and if they send to Dame Elizabeth Calthorpe, there ye shall not fail of one or both, she hath other waters to make folks to brouke." We do not know exactly the meaning of "brouke;" in Percy's Reliques the word "brok" is used in the sense of enjoy or please, but it will not bear that meaning. It may be from the German *brechen*, to be sick, but mint-water can hardly be an emetic. She speaks very favourably of the place where she is staying: "Me liketh mine abiding and the country here right well, and I trust when summer cometh and fair weather I shall like it better, for I am cherished here but too well." This interesting letter is dated Monday, Jan. about 1476 or 1477.]

LETTER CCCLXXV.—(XXXV. vol. v. p. 159.)

[This letter is from Dame Elizabeth Brews, the wife of Sir Thomas Brews, of Stinton Hall in Salle, and of Topcroft, to John Paston, and is chiefly interesting as being the commencement of a new treaty for a wife, that at length proved successful. Dame Brews seems from the first to have been decidedly favourable to him, and this letter contains an urgent invitation to come to Topcroft and meet some of her influential relations, she promising in the mean time that she will "go as well and as rightfully and as consciensly (*conscientiously*) as I can for both the parties." It is dated Jan. or Feb. of either 1476 or 1477.]

LETTER CCCLXXVI.—(XXXVI. vol. v. p. 161.)

[Another letter, evidently quickly following the preceding, from Dame Elizabeth Brews to John Paston. She gives the following account of the progress she has already made. "I sent mine husband a bill of the matter that ye know of, and he wrote another bill to me again touching the same matter, and he would that ye should go unto my mistress your mother, and assay if ye might get the whole 20*l.* into your hands, and then he would be more glad to marry with you, and will give you an 100*l.*; and, cousin, that day that she is married my father [Sir Giles Debenham] will give her fifty marks (33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*). But an we accord I shall give you a great treasure, that is, a witty gentlewoman, and, if I say it, both good and virtuous; for if I should take money for her I would not give her for a 1000*l.*; but, cousin, I trust you so much, that I would think her well beset on you an she[1] were worth much more." Parental fondness is here very pleasingly exhibited, but the sums mentioned on each side are much smaller than any that John Paston had been bargaining for previously, and we may, therefore, hope that he properly estimated her goodness and virtue. The letter concludes with another invitation to Topcroft. It is dated in Jan. or Feb. about 1476-7.

[1] [Erroneously printed *ge* in Fenn.]

LETTER CCCLXXVII.—(LXX. vol. ii. p. 205.)

The politicians of these times, we here see, looked upon the death of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, as an event of great importance to all Europe. He was dismounted from his horse, and slain in a battle fought on the 5th of January, 1476, before Nancy, the capital city of Lorrain, between his forces and those of Renate, Duke of Lorrain.

To John Paston, Esq., at Norwich, in haste.

I RECOMMEND me to you; letting you weet that yesterday began the great council, to which all the estates of the land shall come to, but if (*unless*) it be for great and reasonable excuses; and I suppose the chief cause of this assembly is to commune what is best to do now upon the great change by the death of the Duke of Burgundy, and for the keeping of Calais and the Marches, and for the preservation of the amities taken lately, as well with France as now with the members of Flanders; whereto I doubt not there shall be in all haste both the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, whereof I would that my brother Edmund wist.

Item, I feel but little effect in the labour of W. Alyngton, nevertheless I deem it is not for you, she shall not pass 200 marks as far as I can understand apart.

Item, I will not forget you otherwise.

Item, it is so that this day I hear great likelihood that my Lord Hastings shall hastily go to Calais with great company; if I think it be for you (*for your advantage*) to be one, I shall not forget you.

Item, this day the matter between Mrs. Anne Hawte and me hath been soor (*in a sure manner*) broken both to the cardinal,[1] to my lord chamberlain,[2] and to myself, and I am in good hope; when I hear and know more, I shall send you word.

It seemeth that the world is all quavering, it will reboil somewhere, so that I deem young men shall be cherished, take your heart to you; I fear that I cannot be excused, but that I shall forth with my Lord Hastings over the sea, but I shall send you word in haste, and if I go I hope not to tarry long.

Item, to my brother Edmund. I am like to speak with Mistress Dixon in haste, and some deem that there shall be condescended that if E. P. (*Edmund Paston*) come to London that his costs shall be paid for.

I shall hastily send you word of more things.

Written at London, the 14th day of February, in the 16th year of Edward IV., the Friday afore Fastingong (*Fasting-going*, i. e. *Lent*). JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

London, Friday, 14th of February, 1476. 16 E. IV.

LETTER CCCLXXVIII.—(LXXI. vol. ii. p. 209.)

This is another curious letter from Lady Brews. We here see that the custom of choosing valentines was a sport practised in the houses of the gentry at this time.

To my worshipful cousin, John Paston[3] *be this bill delivered, &c.*

COUSIN, I recommend me unto you, thanking you heartily for the great cheer ye made me and all my folks the last time that I was at Norwich; and ye promised me that ye would never break the matter to Margery[4] unto such time as ye and I were at a point. But ye have made her such (*an*) advocate for you, that I may never have rest night nor day for calling and crying upon to bring the said matter to effect, &c.

[1] Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury.

[2] William, Lord Hastings. Though this important business between Sir John Paston and Mrs. Anne Hawte has been so often mentioned, it has never been so clearly stated as to be exactly ascertained.

[3] John Paston was the next brother to Sir John Paston, knight, and his heir in 1479. He was high-sheriff of Norfolk, &c., in 1485, created a knight banneret in 1487, and died in 1503.

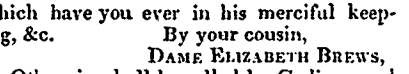
[4] Margery, daughter of Sir Thomas and Elizabeth Brews, of Stinton Hall, in Salle.

And, cousin, upon Friday is Saint Valentine's Day, and every bird chuseth him a make (*mate*); and if it like you to come on Thursday at night, and so purvey you that ye may abide there till Monday, I trust to God that ye shall so speak to mine husband; and I shall pray that we shall bring the matter to a conclusion, &c.

For, cousin, "it is but a simple onk,
That's cut down at the first stroke,"

for ye will be reasonable I trust to God, which have you ever in his merciful keeping, &c. By your cousin,

DAME ELIZABETH BREWS,
Otherwise shall be called by God's grace.[1]



Between the 8th and 14th of February, 1476-7. 16 E. IV.

[1] [That is, not *cousin*, but *cn*.]

LETTER CCCLXXIX.—(LXXII. vol. ii. p. 211.)

Some parts of the letter seem intended for verse, as the lines, though unequal, rhyme. I have written them, in the modernised letter, so that the rhymes end the lines, though perhaps I am wrong. The lady appears conscious that she has opened her heart in the letter, and with a becoming modesty conjures J. Paston, that it may "be seyn of non' erthely creatur safe only himself." [This is certainly an interesting specimen of the love-letters of a young lady of the fifteenth century, and goes far to justify John Paston's final choice, though from the tenour of her letter he does not seem perfectly satisfied with her fortune, and to have been endeavouring to get it increased; the lady indeed fears that it may break off the match; as from the next letter appears to have been nearly the case; her own sentiments are much more honourable and disinterested. We have great doubts as to the intended versification, but we have let it stand.]

Unto my right well-beloved valentine, John Paston, Esq., be this bill delivered, &c.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful, and my right well-beloved Valentine, I recommend me unto you, full heartily desiring to hear of your welfare, which I beseech Almighty God long for to preserve unto his pleasure and your heart's desire.

And if it please you to hear of my welfare, I am not in good heele (*health*) of body nor of heart, nor shall be till I hear from you;

For there wottys (*knows*) no creature what pain that I endure,
And for to be dead (*for my life*), I dare it not dyscur' (*discover*).

And my lady my mother hath laboured the matter to my father full diligently, but she can no more get than ye know of, for the which God knoweth I am full sorry. But if that ye love me, as I trust verily that ye do, ye will not leave me therefore; for if that ye had not half the livelihood that ye have, for to do the greatest labour that any woman alive might, I would not forsake you.

And if ye command me to keep me true wherever I go,
I wis I will do all my might you to love, and never no mo.
And if my friends say that I do amiss,
They shall not me let so for to do,
Mine heart me bids evermore to love you
Truly over all earthly thing,
And if they be never so wrath,
I trust it shall be better in time coming.

No more to you at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in keeping; and I beseech you that this bill be not seen of none earthly creature save only yourself, &c.

And this letter was endited at Topcroft, with full heavy heart, &c.

By your own
MARGERY BREWS.

Topcroft.
February, 1476-7. 16 E. IV.

LETTER CCCLXXX.—(LXXIII. vol. ii. p. 215.)

J. Paston seems by this letter to have answered the last, but not to her satisfaction, respecting his being content to take her with the fortune her father proposed to give on her marriage. She acknowledges the pleasure it would give her to find that he would marry her with the fortune her father had fixed, and with great sensibility requests him, if he cannot acquiesce, not to come to Topcroft, but to let matters remain as they were. The letter, at the same time that it acknowledges her regard for J. Paston, shows that she had a proper attention to her own consequence and her father's determination. [It is indeed a most frank, kind-hearted, and right-minded letter. It makes one thoroughly ashamed of the brokering spirit of her Valentine, and fearful that her anticipation of being "the merriest maiden on ground" could in any case hardly be realised.]

To my right well-beloved cousin, John Paston, Esq., be this letter delivered, &c.

Right worshipful and well-beloved Valentine, in my most humble wise I recommend me unto you, &c. And heartily I thank you for the letter which that ye send me by John Beckerton, whereby I understand and know that ye be purposed to come to Topcroft in short time, and without any errand or matter but only to have a conclusion of the matter betwixt my father and you; I would be most glad of any creature alive so that the matter might grow to effect. And thereas (*whereas*) ye say, and (*if*) ye come and find the matter no more towards you than ye did aforetime, ye would no more put my father and my lady my mother to no cost nor business for that cause a good while after, which causeth mine heart to be full heavy; and if that ye come, and the matter take to none effect, then should I be much more sorry and full of heaviness.

And as for myself I have done and understand[1] in the matter that I can or may, as God knoweth; and I let you plainly understand that my father will no more money part withal in that behalf, but an 100*l.* and 50 marks (33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*), which is right far from the accomplishment of your desire.

Wherefore, if that ye could be content with that good and my poor person I would be the merriest maiden on ground; and if ye think not yourself so satisfied, or that ye might have much more good, as I have understood by you afore; good, true, and loving Valentine, that ye take no such labour upon you as to come more for that matter, but let (*what*) is, pass, and never more to be spoken of, as I may be your true lover and beadwoman during my life.

No more unto you at this time, but Almighty Jesu preserve you both body and soul, &c.

By your Valentine,

Margery Brews.

Topcroft, 1476-7.

LETTER CCCLXXXI.—(LXXIV. vol. ii. p. 217.)

This letter seems written by a common friend of both the parties, who appears solicitous for the marriage taking effect. He informs J. Paston that in addition to the fortune intended to be given by Sir Thomas Brews, the furniture of her chamber and her apparel should amount to the sum of 100 marks, or 66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* And he hints, as from Lady Brews, that they should be entertained at her table for three years after their marriage. [This is a striking instance of the want of currency. Here, as in many other instances, we see that persons possessing a superfluity of the products of their landed property, had great difficulty in converting it into money. The entertainment for three years of the married couple was thought less of than any the slightest increase of the dowry money.]

Unto my right worshipful master, John Paston, Esq., be this bill delivered, &c.

Right worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you; letting you know, as for the young gentlewoman, she oweth you her good heart and love; as I know by the communication that I have had with her for the same.

And, Sir, ye know what my master and my lady hath proffered with her, 200 marks (133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*), and I dare say, that her chamber and arayment (*apparel*) shall be worth 100 marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*), and I heard my lady say that and (*if*) the case required, both ye and she should have your board with my lady three years after.

And I understand by my lady that she

[1] [Probably *understood*—supported—acted in.]

would that ye should labour the matter to my master, for it should be the better.

And I heard my lady say,

"That it was a feeble oak,
That was cut down at the first stroke."

And ye be beholden unto my lady for her good word, for she hath never praised you too much.[1]

Sir, like as I promised you, I am your man, and my good will ye shall have in word and deed, &c.

And Jesu have you in his merciful keeping, &c.

By your man,

THOMAS KELA.

February, 1476-7.
16 E. IV.

LETTER CCCLXXXII.—(LXXV. vol. ii. p. 221.)

We find by this letter that J. Paston was as desirous of having all obstacles to the match removed, as the lady could be, and now writes from the house where she was, and to which I suppose he went on the receipt of her last letter. He takes great pains to explain the reason for the meeting at Norwich to have been fixed by his desire, fearing his mother might have been displeased with any alteration in the original plan. [To us it rather appears that, not being able to get a larger fortune, and having been so repeatedly disappointed, he had made up his mind to accept of this, and to trust to future expectations; hoping that his future father-in-law would be kind to him, "though he be hard to me as yet." What could induce Sir. J. Fenn to say that he "was as desirous of having all obstacles removed as the lady could be," we cannot conceive. His care for his mother is, however, a redeeming trait in his character.]

To my right worshipful mother, Margaret Paston.

RIGHT worshipful mother, after all duties of recommendation, in as humble wise as I can I beseech you of your daily blessing. Mother, please it you to weet, that the cause that Dame Elizabeth Brews desireth to meet with you at Norwich, and not at Langley as I appointed with you at my last being at Mauteby, is by my means; for my brother Thomas Jermyn, which knoweth nought of the mate (*match*), telleth me that the Causey ere ye can come to Bokenham Ferry is so overflown that there is no man that may on ethe [*in ease*] pass it, though he be right well horsed; which is no meet way for you to pass over, God defend (*forbid*) it. But, all things reckoned, it shall be less cost to you to be at Norwich, as for a day or tweyn and pass not [*not beyond*], than to meet at Langley, where everything is dear; and your horse may be sent home again the same Wednesday.

Mother, I beseech you for diverse causes that my sister Anne may come with you to Norwich; mother, the matter is in a reasonable good way, and I trust with God's mercy, and with your good help, that it shall take effect better to mine advantage than I told you of at Mauteby; for I trow there is not a kinder woman living than I shall have to my mother-in-law if the matter take; nor yet a kinder father-in-law than I shall have, though he be hard to me as yet.

All the circumstances of the matter, which I trust to tell you at your coming to Norwich, could not be written in three leaves of paper, and ye know my lewd (*poor*) head well enough, I may not write long, wherefore I fery over (*defer*) all things till I may await on you myself. I shall do tonnen (*cause to be tunned*) into your place a dozen ale, and bread according, against Wednesday. If Sym might be forborn (*spared*) it were well done that he were at Norwich on Wednesday in the morning at market. Dame Elizabeth Brews shall lie at John Cook's;[2] if it might please you, I would be glad that she might dine in your house on Thursday, for there should you have most secret talking.

And, mother, at the reverence of God beware that ye be so purveyed for that ye take no cold by the way towards Norwich, for it is the most perilous March that ever was seen by any man's days that now liveth; and I pray to Jesu preserve you and yours.

Written at Topcroft the 8th day of March.

Your son and humble servant,

JOHN PASTON.

Topcroft, Saturday,
8th of March, 1476-7. 17 E. IV.

[1] That is, deservedly praised you; for though she hath praised you much, her praise is not above your merit.

[2] John Cook was mayor of Norwich in 1484.

LETTER CCCLXXXIII.—(LXXVI. vol. ii. p. 225.)

This letter, I suppose, accompanied one from J. Paston, in which the exact terms were specified, to his brother Sir John. Sir Thomas Brews seemed to expect that Sir John Paston would likewise do something for his brother on this occasion. [Sir Thomas seems certainly to be a "hard" determined man, but John Paston appears to have wrung at least the loan of a considerable sum from him. Sir Thomas died in 1482.]

To my right worshipful cousin, Sir John Paston, Knight, be this letter delivered, &c.

RIGHT worshipful, and my heartily well-beloved cousin, I recommend me unto you, desiring to hear of your welfare, which I pray God may be as continually good as I would have mine own; and, cousin, the cause of my writing unto you, at this time, is I feel (*perceive*) well by my cousin John Paston your brother, that ye have understanding of a matter which is in communication touching a marriage, with God's grace, to be concluded betwixt my said cousin your brother and my daughter Margery, which is far communed and not yet concluded, nor neither shall nor may be till I have answer from you again of your good will and assent to the said matter; and also of the obligation which that I send you herewith; for, cousin, I would be sorry to see either my cousin your brother, or my daughter, driven to live so mean a life as they should do, if the six score pounds should be paid (*out*) of their marriage money; and, cousin, I have taken myself so near in levying[1] of this said six score pounds, that whereas I had laid up an 100*l.* for the marriage of a younger daughter of mine, I have now lent the said 100*l.*, and 20*l.* over that, to my cousin your brother, to be paid again by such easy days as the obligation which I send you herewith specifies.

And, cousin, I were right loath to bestow so much upon one daughter that the other her sisters should fare the worse; wherefore, cousin, if ye will that this matter shall take effect under such form as my cousin your brother hath written unto you, I pray you put thereto your good will, and some of your cost, as I have done of mine more largely than ever I purpose to do to any two of her sisters, as God knoweth mine intent, whom I beseech to send you your levest (*dearest*) heart's desire.

Written at Topcroft, the 8th day of March, &c. By your cousin,

THOMAS BREWS, *knight*.

Topcroft,
Saturday, 8th of March,
1476. 17 E. IV.

LETTER CCCLXXXIV.—(XXXVII. vol. v. p. 165.)

[SIR JOHN PASTON here writes from Calais to his brother John about his marriage with Margery Brews, with which match he seems well content, saying, "Bykerton telleth me that she loveth you well; if I died, I had lever ye had her than the Lady Wargrave [*Waldegrave*], nevertheless she singeth well with an harp." The Lady Wargrave appears to have been another sought-for match of the indefatigable John Paston's, and even yet another is alluded to somewhat humorously in this same letter. Sir John Paston says, "as for this matter of Mistress Burley I hold it but a bare thing; I hold that it passeth not [*here the number is torn from the letter*] marks, I saw her for your sake; she is a little one, she may be a woman hereafter if she be not old now; her person seemeth thirteen years of age, her years men say be full eighteen; she knoweth not of the matter I suppose, nevertheless she desired to see me, as glad as I was to see her." The letter is dated Sunday, March 9, 1476-7.]

[1] Fenn has *leaving* in mistake, which he translates 'parting with.' *Levying* is used in the sense of *raising*.

LETTER CCCLXXXV.—(XXXVIII. vol. v. p. 167.)

[JOHN PASTON writes from Norwich to his brother Sir John at Calais, about his negociation for his marriage with Margery Brews, as to which he says, "I am yet at no certainty, her father is so hard; but I trow I have the good-will of my lady her mother and her:" he then proceeds to warn him of trusting J. Bykerton too far, as he is a man "at wild," and is sore endangered (*in debt*) to divers in this country; and that Perse Moody, one of Sir John's old retainers, is at Caister in great distress, but he adds in conclusion that "carpenters of my craft, that I use now, have not alderbest their wits their own." This seems to be some proverbial allusion to the distraction of thought in lovers, but we doubt if there was much fear of John Paston losing his wits through love. The letter is dated on the same day as the last, Sunday, March 9, 1476-7.]

NUMBER CCCLXXXVI.—(XXXIX. vol. v. p. 171.)

[THIS paper is headed "A determination of Sir Thomas Brews how much he would give with his daughter Margery in marriage." It contains several modifications of terms: first, if the dowry out of the manor of Sparham does not exceed ten marks, that then he will give 133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* in hand and board free for two or three years; or else 200*l.* without their board, payable by fifty marks (33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) yearly; secondly, that he will give four hundred marks (266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*), 50*l.* on the day of marriage, and 50*l.* yearly, and lend John Paston 120*l.* "to pledge out the manor of Swainsthorp," provided he procures security for its repayment, "not paid of the marriage money, nor of the proper goods of my said cousin John;" thirdly, if the whole of the profits of Sparham are settled on them for their joint lives, he will give the said four hundred marks, and their board for a year or two; but this last clause about their board is struck through with a pen. The paper is dated March, 1467.]

LETTER CCCLXXXVII.—(LXXVII. vol. v. p. 227.)

Under the direction of this letter, and in a hand of the time (I believe in Sir John Paston's hand) is written "Jon Pympe," "xvj die Mar' A°. E. 4. 17" (16th day of March, 17 E. IV.), being the date when the letter was received. I have given this letter merely as a specimen of the humour of the time, which, though indelicate, may I fear be matched by many a modern correspondence. Some amour seems to be couched under the simile of the sparrow, the barley, and the door, &c. The latter part of this epistle shows us what were the qualities of a horse at that time most esteemed. The writer was a person of some consideration, as he was to have had Sir J. Paston's lodgings in London, and was cousin to Sir J. Scot, deputy governor of Calais.

To Master Sir John Paston, be this letter delivered in Calais.

HONOUR and joy be to you, my right good master, and most assured brother; letting you know that all your well-willers and servants in these parts, that I know, fare well, and better would if they might hear of your well being, and forthwith some of your French and Burgundy tidings; for we in these parts be in great dread lest the French king with some assaults should in any wise disturb you of your soft, sote (*sweet*), and sure sleeps, but as yet we nothing can hear that he so disposeth him.

[Here follow some allusions to the women of Flanders, which, though possessing some humour, is of too coarse a nature to be given here.]

But in one thing we praise your sadnesses (*wisdoms*) and discretions right much, that is, in keeping of your truce and peace with the king of France as the king hath commanded; and a great reason why, for it were too much for you to have war with all the world at once, for the war aforesaid keepeth you blameless, for every reasonable man weeteth well,

that it is too much for any people living to do both at once. Sir, as for the more part of my thought, I pray you recommend me unto yourself, praying you that I may continue in such case as your goodness hath taken me of old, and if ye list to send any tidings or other thing to the parties that were wont to warm them by your fire, in faith I shall do your errand.

As for barley, it is of the same price that it was wont to be of, and is the most sure corn and best enduring that may be; and, Sir, where that some time was a little hole in a wall, is now a door large enough and easy passage, whereof ye were the deviser, and have thank for your labour of some parties, but nothing lasteth ever; I mean that I trow my passage shall hastily fail me, and the door shall be shut up again; less then (*unless*) fortune be agreeable to have my counsel kept; for not long ago making my entry at that passage, I saw a sparrow that useth those eireys, and I saw her set so still that I could not endure but I must needs shoot her, and so God me help I smote her I trow even to the heart; and so I dread me lest either the barley will eat the sparrow, or else the sparrow will eat the barley; but as yet all is well, but reason sheweth me that it must needs fail by continuance, less then (*unless*) I forsake both the sparrow and the barley also.

Sir, I have thank for the shew that I once made of you and daily gramercy (*great thanks*), and ye their prayer.

Sir, furthermore I beseech you as ye will do anything for me, that ye see one day for my sake, and for your own pleasure, all the good horse in Calais, and if there be amongst them any prized horse of deeds that is to sell, in especial that he be well trotting of his own courage without force of spurs, and also a steering horse [1] if he be he is the better; I pray you send me word of his colour, deeds, and courage, and also of his price, feigning as ye would buy him yourself, and also I would have him somewhat large, not with the largest; but no small horse, as (*q. no?*) more than a double horse; praying you above all things to have this in remembrance, and that hastily as may be, for there is late promised me help to such an intent, and I wote not how long it shall endure; and therefore I beseech you send me word by time.

I trow the French men have taken up all the good horse in Picardy, and also they be wont to be heavy horse in labour, and that I love not; but a heavy horse of flesh, and light of courage I love well, for I love no horse that will always be lean and slender like greyhounds. God keep you.

Your JOHN PYMPE.

(*Recd.*) Sunday, 16th of March, 1476. 17 E. IV.

I pray you to recommend me to my cousin Sir John Scot and all his, in especial Mrs. Bedingfield.[2]

NUMBER CCCLXXXVIII.—(XL. vol. v. p. 173.)

[THIS paper is headed "Notes touching the marriage between John Paston, Esq., and Margery Brews." They are written by John Paston, and seem to be intended for himself only. They are by no means clear, but, for whatever purpose, his mother was not to be informed of the conclusion of the treaty. The conditions here stated are those mentioned in Sir J. Brews' "Determination." Dated March, 1476-7.]

[1] Quære, a horse that obeys the rein? [We rather think an entire horse is meant. See also two passages at the end of Letter cccxci.]

[2] Margaret, daughter of Sir John Scot, and wife to Edmund Bedingfield.

LETTER CCCLXXXIX.—(XLI. vol. v. p. 177.)

[ANOTHER letter from John Pympe to Sir John Paston about his horse. The writer begins by saying, "I have written to you three long letters, which as yet be answerless;" and shortly after says, "this is the fifth letter I have sent you." There is nothing else but a renewal of the request for Sir John's assistance in procuring a horse, and a repetition of what he considers a good horse ought to be. Dated March, 1477.]

LETTER CCCXC.—(XLII. vol. v. p. 181.)

[SIR JOHN PASTON in this letter writes rather a stern answer to the exorbitant demands of his brother John for his own advantageous settlement. He says, "Ye have now written again. You need not to pray me to do that might be to your profit and worship that I might do, oftener than once, or to let me weet thereof, for to my power I would do for you, and take as much pain for your weal, and remember it when per case ye should not think on it yourself. I would be as glad that one gave you a manor of 20*l.* by the year as if he gave it to myself, by my troth. Item, where(*as*) ye think that I may with conscience recompense it again unto our stock of other lands that I have of that value in fee simple, it is so that Snailwell by my grandfather's will once, and by my father's will secondly, is entailed to the issue of my father's body. Item, as for Sporle 20*l.* by year; I had thereof but twenty marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) by year, which twenty marks by year, and the ten marks (6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) over, I have endangered, as ye well know of that bargain; which, if it be not redeemed I must recompense some other manor of mine to one of my brethren for the said ten marks, and twenty marks that longeth to me, wherefore I keep the manor of Runham; then have I fee simple land, the manor of Winterton with Bastwick and Billys, which in all is not twenty marks by year, which is not to the value of the manor of Sparham. And as for Caister it were no convenient land to exchange for such a thing; nor it were not policy for me to set that manor in such case for all manner of haps. I need not to make this excuse to you, but that your mind is troubled; I pray you rejoice not yourself too much in hope to obtain a thing that all your friends may not ease you of, for if my mother were disposed to give me and any woman in England the best manor she hath to have it to me and my wife, and to the heirs of our two bodies begotten, I would not take it of her, by God. Stablish yourself upon a good ground, and grace shall follow; your matter is far spoken of, and blown wide, and if it prove no better I would it had never been spoken of. Also that matter noiseth me, that I am so unkind that I let (*hinder*) altogether. I think not a matter happy, nor well handled, nor politicly dealt with, when it can never be finished without an inconvenience, and to any such bargain I hope never to be condescending nor of counsel; if I were at the beginning of such a matter, I would have hoped to have made a better conclusion, if they mock you not. This matter is driven thus far forth without my counsel; I pray you make an end without my counsel: if it be well I would be glad, if it be otherwise it is pity. I pray you trouble me no more in this matter." There is no date to the letter, but it clearly belongs to this period.]

LETTER CCCXCI.—(LXXVII.* vol. ii. p. 235.)

I have here given a letter written to Sir John Paston in rhyme, as a specimen of the poetry of the age. By the writer's inquiry concerning a horse, and his referring back to his former letters, this appears to have been written in the latter end of March, or in April, 1477, 17 E. IV. [Pympe's horse, like John Paston's hawk, seems to have become a passion—rhyme and reason, and six letters in quick succession, to one who will neither "hear, nor see, nor say, nor send," seems a great deal to be wasted for such an object. There is but little in the poetry, but the stanza is curiously constructed, and there is considerable easiness in the versification and flow of thought.]

To Master Sir John Paston, Knight, be this letter delivered at Calais.

FRESH amorous sights of countries far and strange
Have all fordone your old affection;
In pleasures new, your heart doth scour and range
So high and far, that like as the falcon
Which is aloft, telleth (*q. taketh*) scorn to look a down
On him that wont was her feathers to pick and imp;
Right so forgotten ye have your poor Pymp;
That writeth, sendeth, and wisheth all day your weal
More than his own; but ye nor hear, nor see,
Nor say, nor send, and ever I write and seal
In prose and rhyme, as well as it will be;
Some evil tongue I trow mis-saith of me
And else your fast and faithful friendliness
Ye think mis-spent on such as I, I guess.

I will abate my customable concourse,
To you so costuous,[1] whensoever ye come again,
Which that I feel of reason, by the course
Of my proffered service, hath made you so unfain;
For verily the water of the fountain,
With bread only, forthwith your presence,
Me should content much more than your expense.

But aye deem I thus that fortune hath hired you,
For she but late of sorrows more than many
Hath raked unto my heart an heap more than a mow,
And would that ye should lay thereon on high
Your heavy unkindness to make it fast to lie,
And God know'th well it cannot long lie there
But it will bring me to the church bier.[2]

Take it away therefore, I pray you fair,
For hardily my heart beareth heavy enough;
For there is sorrow, at rest as in his chair,
Fixed so fast with his pricks (*prickles*) rough,
That in good faith I wot not when I love.[3]
For Master Paston, the thing whereon my bliss
Was wholly set, is all fordone, I wis.
By your
JOHN PYMPE.

This being the sixth letter that I have sent you.

Always praying you to remember the horse that I have in every letter written for; as thus, that it would please you to understand who hath the *gentlest* horse in trotting and steering that is in Calais, and if he be to sell to send me word of his price, largeness, and colour.

It is told me that the master porter hath a courageous roaned horse, and that he would put him away because he is dangerous in company,[4] and of that I force (*care*) not, so that he be not churlish at a spur, as plunging; and also I set not by him but if (*unless*) he trot somewhat high and genteelly. No more, but God keep you.

Latter end of March, or April,
1477, 17 E. IV.

[1] Expensive.

[2] [Fenn, like other annotators of his day, undertakes to mend the metre of his original, and reads "*unto* the church bier." Certainly without any improvement.]

[3] [The original is "lowh," and the corresponding rhymes of this stanza are "ynowh," and "rowh." Lowh cannot certainly be *love*, which makes the line nonsense, for the poet goes on to describe how he loves "Master Paston:" it is probably *low* as a cow, used here for sigh, allowable enough to a poet in want of a rhyme, and would then mean that his sorrow makes him sigh so continually that he becomes unconscious of it.]

[4] [See Letter ccclxviii.]

LETTER CCCXCII.—(LXXVIII. vol. ii. p. 239.)

In this letter Sir John Paston shows himself a kind and generous brother, in permitting his mother to give the manor of Sparham, which appears to be entailed on him and his issue, to his younger brother; and though he cannot conscientiously permit the entail to be defeated, as the will of the dead by this means would not be performed, he very readily consents to enter into an engagement to debar himself from ever molesting his brother or his widow in their quiet possessions thereof. [Notwithstanding the late severe letter, Sir John appears to have relented towards his brother; indeed Sir John appears throughout as much the kindest and most disinterested man of the two. Still he will give nothing but his good wishes, and his reversionary interest in the manor of Sparham for his own life only.]

To my right worshipful mother, Margaret Paston.

PLEASE it you to weet that I have received your letter, wherein is remembered the great hurt that by likelihood might fall to my brother, if so be that this matter between him and Sir Thomas Brews's daughter take not effect; whereof I would be as sorry as himself reasonably; and also the wealthy and convenient marriage that should be if it take effect; whereof I would be as glad as any man; and am better content now that he should have her, than any other that ever he was heretofore about to have had.[1] Considered her person, her youth, and the stock that she is come of, the love on both sides, the tender favour she is in with her father and mother, the kindness of her father and mother to her in departing [*parting*] with her, the favour also and good conceit that they have in my brother, the worshipful and virtuous disposition of her father and mother, which prognosticateth that of likelihood the maid should be virtuous and good; all which considered, and the necessary relief that my brother must have, I marvel the less that ye have departed and given him the manor of Sparham in such form as I have knowledge of by W. Gurney, Lomner, and Skipwith; and I am right glad to see in you such kindness unto my brother as ye have done to him, and would by my troth lever (*rather*) than an 100*l.* that it were fee-simple land, as it is intailed, which by likelihood should prosper with him and his blood the better in time to come, and should also never cause debate in our blood (*contention in our family*) in time to come, which God defend (*forbid*), for that were unnatural.

Item, another inconvenience is, whereas I understand that the manor is given to my brother, and to his wife, and to the issue between them begotten, if the case were so that he and she had issue together a daughter or more, and his wife died, and he married after another and had issue a son, that son should have none land, and he being (*although he be*) his father's heir; and for the inconvenience that I have known late inure [*take place*] in case like, and yet endureth in Kent between a gentleman and his sister, I would ye took the advice of your counsel in this point; and that that is past you by writing or by promise, I deem verily in you that ye did it of kindness, and in eschewing of a more (*a greater*) ill that might befall.

Item, whereas it pleaseth you that I should ratify, grant, and confirm the said gift unto my brother, it is so that with mine honesty I may not, and for other causes.

The pope will suffer a thing to be used, but he will not license nor grant it to be used nor done; and so I.

My brother John knoweth mine intent well enough heretofore in this matter; I will be found to him as kind a brother as I may be.

Item, if it be so that Sir Thomas Brews and his wife think that I would trouble my brother and his wife in the said manor, I can find no means to put them in surety thereof, but, if it need, to be bound in an obligation with a condition that I shall not trouble nor infet (*infest*) them therein.

Item, I think that she is made sure enough

[1] [In Fenn's translation this passage stands thus—"than any other, that ever he was heretofore about to have had considered. Her person," &c. This cannot be understood, the verb *considered* standing wholly unconnected. The original has neither points nor capital letters; we have therefore ventured on a slight alteration, which at least gives a meaning to the sentence. "Considered her person," &c., is "her person being considered," &c.]

in estate in the land, and that of right I deem they shall make none obstacles at my writing, for I had never none estate in the land, nor I would not that I had.

No more to you at this time, but Almighty God have you in keeping.

Written at Calais, the 28th day of March, in the 17th year of Edward IV.

By your son,

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

Calais, Friday, 28th of March, 1477. 17 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXCIII.—(LXXIX. vol. ii. p. 245.)

[A kindly letter of Sir John to his brother, promising in generals, but saving his conscience and worship. The value set upon Boulogne, and the superstitious expectation of the intervention of the Virgin Mary in its favour, are curious instances of the manners of the age; but it must be remarked, to the credit of Sir John, that he does not seem infected with the superstition himself.]

To John Paston, Esq.

RIGHT worshipful and heartily-beloved brother, I recommend me to you; letting you weet, that as by Perse Moody, when he was here, I had no leisure to send answer in writing to you, and to my cousin Gurney, of your letters, but for a conclusion ye shall find me to you as kind as I may be, my conscience and worship saved, which, when I speak with you and them, ye both shall well understand, and I pray God send you as good speed in that matter as I would ye had, and as I hope ye shall have ere this letter come to you; and I pray God send you issue between you that may be as honourable as ever was any of your ancestors and theirs, whereof I would be as glad in manner as of mine own; wherefore I pray you send me word how ye do, and if God fortune me to do well, and be of any power, I will be to Sir Thomas Brews and my lady his wife a very son-in-law for your sake, and take them as ye do; and do for them as if I were in case like with them as ye be.

No more, but Jesu have you in keeping.

Written at Calais, the 14th day of April, in the 17th year of Edward IV.

As for tidings here, the French king hath gotten many of the towns of the Duke of Burgundy, as Saint Quintin's, Abbeville, Montreuil; and now of late he hath gotten Bethune and Hesden with the castle there, which is one of the royalest castles of the world; and on Sunday at even the Admiral of France laid siege at Boulogne; and this day it is said that the French king shall come thither; and this night it is said that there was a vision seen about the walls of Boulogne, as it had been a woman with a marvellous light; men deem that our lady there will show herself a lover to that town: God forefend [*forbid*] that it were French, it were worth 40,000*l.* that it were English.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

Calais, Monday, 14th of April, 1477. 17 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXCIV.—(XLIII. vol. v. p. 185.)

[THE difficulties attending the arrangement of the pecuniary matters appear to have destroyed, at least for a time, John Paston's most hopeful prospects of marriage. His mother now writes from Mauteby to Dame Elizabeth Brews, soliciting an early interview with her and Sir Thomas in order that they may, if possible, remove the difficulties, observing to her with some skill, "that with your advice and help, and mine together, we shall find some way that it shall not break; for if it did it were none honour to neither parties, and in chief to them in whom the default is, considering that it is so far spoken."

She speaks of her son's great inclinations towards the marriage, and concludes, "I beseech you that I may be recommended by this bill to my cousin your husband, and to my cousin Margery, to whom I supposed to have given another name ere this time." Dated Wednesday, June 11, 1477.]

LETTER CCCXCV.—(V. Appendix to vol. ii. p. 297.)

[This letter, as far as "xxcj day of Aurill," is written by the secretary of the Lord Hastings, from thence to the end by that nobleman himself, in a hand almost illegible. John Paston appears here to have been in the service of, and so highly respected by, the Lord Hastings, as to be sent as a kind of deputy governor of the castle of Guisnes, during the illness of his brother, Sir Ralph Hastings. [We have placed it according to Fenn's chronological order, although we have no doubt that John Paston was not at Guisnes at this period. But as the original has no date of the year, it is much easier to discover that it is wrongly placed here than to decide where it would be properly placed. We are inclined to think, however, it may be guessed to belong to that earlier period when Sir John was exerting himself to get John Paston retained by Lord Hastings, he having probably succeeded, though it is not mentioned.]

To my right trusty and well-beloved servant, John Paston, Esq.

JOHN PASTON, I recommend me unto you. And whereas I appointed and desired you to go over unto Guisnes to give your attendance and assistance upon my brother, Sir Ralph Hastings, in all such things as concern the surety and defence of the castle of Guisnes during his infirmities; it is showed unto me that ye have full truly and diligently acquitted you unto my said brother, in all his businesses since your coming thither. Whereof I thank you heartily. And as I conceive to my great comfort and gladness my said brother is well recovered and amended, thanked be God. And so I trust he may now spare you. Whereupon I have written unto him, if he may so do, to licence you to come over unto me again. Wherefore I will and desire you, the assent of my said brother had, to dispose you to come over in all goodly haste, as well for such great matters as I feel by your friends ye have to do here, as to give your attendance upon me. And (*at*) your return you shall be to me welcome. From London, the 26th day of April.

I pray you in nowise to depart as yet, without my brother Roaf's (*Ralph's*) assent and agreement; and recommend me to my sister, all my nieces, to the constable, and to all reeves. Your true friend,

HASTINGS.[1]

London, 26th of April, 147—.
E. IV.

LETTER CCCXCVI.—(LXXX. vol. ii. p. 249.)

[John Paston's money affairs occupy the principal part of this letter. Money, indeed, seems to have been looked after pretty sharply, when the 15*l.* due on the 21st has been the subject of a negociation on or before the 23rd, and a "reasonable respite" granted, meaning, we suppose, for a "consideration."]

To John Paston, Esq.

I RECOMMEND me to you, letting you weet that I have spoken with Harry Colet,[2] and entreated him in my best wise for you, so that at the last he is agreed to a reasonable respite for the 15*l.* that ye should have paid him at Midsummer as he saith, and (*he*) is glad to do you ease or pleasure in all that he may; and I told him that ye would, as I supposed, be here at London here not long to, and then he looketh after that ye should come see him, for he is sheriff, and hath a goodly house.

Item, my Lady of Oxford[3] looketh after you and Arblaster both.

My Lord of Oxford[4] is not come into England that I can perceive, and so the good lady hath need of help and counsel how that she shall do.

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[1] William Hastings, Lord Hastings, was summoned to Parliament in 1461, 1 E. IV. He was Lieutenant of Calais, and enjoyed several high offices of trust and confidence, in the reign of Edward IV. He married Catherine, daughter of Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury, and was beheaded in the Tower, by the instant order of Richard Duke of Gloucester, on the 13th of June, 1483.

[2] Sir Henry Colet was lord mayor of London in 1486.

[3] Margaret, daughter of Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury; she was, during the imprisonment of her lord, in great distress.

[4] John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, was at this time a prisoner in the castle of Hammes.

No more at this time, but God have you in keeping.

Written at London on Saint Audrey's [*Etheldreda's*] day, in the 17th year of Edward IV.

Tidings but (*only*) that yesterday my Lady Marchioness of Dorset,[1] which is my Lady Hastings's daughter, had childed a son.

Item, my Lord Chamberlain is come hither from Calais, and ridden with the king to Windsor, and the king will be here again on Monday.

JOHN PASTON, *knight.*

London, Monday,
23rd of June, 1477. 17 E. IV.

LETTER CCCXCVII.—(XLIV. vol. v. p. 189.)

[THIS letter, or rather three letters in one, contains a curious display on the part of John Paston of what Sir John Fenn calls "good sense and address in managing a matter," "though some finesse appears." Perhaps the world now will be ill-natured enough to call it trickery, and indeed such is our opinion. Fenn chooses to assume that Sir Thomas Brews had failed in his promises, but this does not appear. His proposals, we have seen, were all conditional, and John Paston had been unable, from various causes, to comply with his terms. He now writes a short note to his mother, telling her that Dame Elizabeth Brews had been sick and not able till now to attend to business; that this day the matter had been communed, "but that other answer than she hath sent you in her letter closed herein can she not have of her husband." He therefore writes a letter in his mother's name which he begs her to have transcribed and sent to Dame Brews, together with "another letter to me, which I may show." In the first of these two he makes his mother say, "I am right sorry that John Paston is no more fortunate than he is in that matter, for, as I understand by your letter, my cousin your husband will give but an 100*l.*, which is no money like for such a jointure as is desired of my son, though his possibility were right easy. But, madam, when I made that large grant in the manor of Sparham, that I have made to him and my cousin your daughter, he told me of another sum that he should have with her than of an 100*l.* He hath before this been wont to tell me none untruth, and what I shall deem in this matter I cannot say, for methinketh if more than an 100*l.* were promised unto him by my cousin your husband, and you, that ye would not let to give it him, without so were that I or he abridged anything of our promise, which I wot well neither I nor he intend to do, if I may understand that his saying to me was truth, and that it may be performed; but wist I that he told me otherwise than my cousin your husband and ye promised him, in order to deceive me of Sparham, by my troth if he have it he shall lose as much by it, if I live, and that shall he well understand the next time I see him." He next alludes to his brother Sir John's refusal to alter the entail of Sparham, and makes his mother express her dislike to "become a daily petitioner of his, sith he hath denied me once mine asking; peradventure he had been better to have performed my desire." This is certainly a masterly stroke to excite at once the hopes and fears of the opposite parties. She is then made to proceed thus: "but, madam, ye are a mother as well as I, where(*fore*) I pray you take it none otherwise but well that I may not do by John Paston as ye will have me to do, for, madam, though I would he did well, I have to purvey for more of my children than him, of which some be of that age that they can tell me well enough that I deal not evenly with them to give John Paston so large and them so little." John Paston here shows a most laudable interest in the welfare of his brethren, though it has not hitherto prevented his ex-

[1] Cecily, second wife to Thomas Grey, Marquis of Dorset, was daughter and heir of William Bonvile, Lord Bonvile and Harrington, by Katharine, daughter of Richard Nevile, Earl of Salisbury, who was now the wife of Lord Hastings, Lord Chamberlain, and governor of Calais.

torting all he could for himself. In the letter addressed to himself, he makes his mother express herself thus :—"I understand well by my cousin Dame Elizabeth Brews's letter, which I send you herewith, whereby ye may understand the same, that they intend not to perform those proffers that ye told me they promised you, trusting that ye told me none otherwise than was promised you; wherefore I charge you on my blessing that ye be well aware how ye bestow your mind without ye have a substance whereupon to live, for I would be sorry to weet you miscarry, for if ye do, in your default, look never after help of me; and also I would be as sorry for her as for any gentlewoman living, wherefore I warn you beware in anywise." The cant of "bestowing his mind" is truly disgusting. His own letter is dated from Salle in Norfolk, June 28, and those intended for his mother from Mauteby, June 29, 1477.]

LETTER CCCXCVIII.—(XLV. vol. v. p. 197.)

[THIS and the following letter contain more of the family disputes about money, and new attempts to get assistance from the widow's property. In this Sir John is the actor; he acquaints his mother that he has no means of paying a debt due to one Kokett, about which she had written to him, because of his expenses for the surety of the manor of Caister, "and the matter between Anne Hawte and me;" he also announces that Sporle is mortgaged for four hundred marks (266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) to Townshend, to be paid within three years, or the manor to be forfeited, which, if it should happen "ye were never like to see me merry after, so God help me." He then coolly adds:—"Ye gave me once 20*l.* towards it, and ye promised as much, which I received, and since of my money of said manor growing that came to your hands was received by you again the said 40*l.*, which, when Kokett should be repaid was not your ease to depart with; nevertheless ye may yet, when you liketh, perform your said gift and promise, and this sum owing to Kokett is not so much; nevertheless I suppose that ye be not so well purveyed, wherefore if it please you at your ease hereafter to perform your said gift and promise, so that I may have it within a year, or two, or yet three, I should per case get your obligation again from Kokett an he pleased, wherefore I beseech you that I may have an assignment of such debts as be owing you payable at leisure of such money as is owing for the wood at Bassingham or elsewhere; for so God help me I should else wilfully undo myself." Respecting his brother John he says "I have granted him as much as I may; I would I were at one communication atween them for his sake;" but adds that the period of his return home is uncertain. Dated Thursday, Aug. 7, 1477.]

LETTER CCCXCIX.—(XLVI. vol. v. p. 201.)

[THIS is Margaret Paston's reply to the previous letter, at which she seems to have been justly indignant. Without any greeting, she begins at once upon the business, and says "I put you in certain that I will never pay him [Kokett] a penny of that duty that is owing to him, though he sue me for it, not of mine own purse, for I will not be compelled to pay your debts against my will; and though I would, I may [*can*] not; wherefore I advise ye to see me saved harmless against him for your own advantage in time coming; for, if I pay it, at long way ye shall bear the loss. And whereas ye write to me that I gave ye 20*l.*, and promised other 20*l.*, that is not so, for I wot well if I had so done ye would not assigned me by your letters of your own hand-writing, the which I have to show, that I should refrain [*retain*] again the same sum of William Peacock, and of your farmers, and buyers of your wood of Sporle; and take this for a full conclusion in this matter, for it

shall be none otherwise for me than I write here to you." She then reproaches him for his improvidence, for having again "so simply" mortgaged Sporle, and says it makes her doubt, "what your disposition will be hereafter for such livelihood as I have been disposed before this time to leave you after my decease; for I think verily that ye will be disposed hereafter to sell or set to mortgage the land that ye should have after me your mother, as gladly and rather than that ye have after your father." She concludes thus: —"And as for your brother William, I would ye should purvey for his finding, for as I told you the last time ye were at home, I would no longer find him at my cost and charge; his board and his school-hire is owing since St. Thomas's day afore Christmas; and he hath great need of gowns and other gear, that were necessary for him to have in haste. I would ye should remember it and purvey them, for as for me I will not. I think ye set but little by my blessing, and if ye did you would have desired it in your writing to me: God make you a good man to his pleasance." The brother William here mentioned was at this time at Eton, and Sir John had the management of the property left for the education and support of his younger brothers. This letter is dated from Mauteby, Monday, Aug. 11, 1477.]

LETTER CCCC.—(LXXXI. vol. ii. p. 251.)

We have in this letter several anecdotes of a public nature, relative to the wars in France, and particularly concerning the hostilities committed by the French king on the possessions of the heiress of Burgundy.

Unto the right worshipful Sir John Paston, Knight.

MASTER PASTON; after all due recommendation and hearty desire to hear of your good hele (*health*), please it you to weet I have spoken with Sir John of Middylton as well as I could and it had been for myself for his hobby that ye desired, and told him he might well forbear him now in as much as Mrs. Jane was dead, and that it is a great cost for him to keep more horse than he needeth; and he answered me that he would sell him with good will, but there should no man buy him under 10*l.* Flemish;[1] and I offered him in your name 10 marks, for he would not hear of none other ambling horse that ye might give him therefore.

And also my lord desired to have bought him for the Lord Schauntrell[2] that is chief captain of St. Omers; and he would (*for*) no less let my lord have him than 10*l.*, and so my lord bought another, and gave him the said lord, for he thought this too dear; nevertheless he will not sell him to no man under that money that he set him on, and so ye may buy your pleasure in him and ye list; for otherwise he will not do for you as I conceive.

And as for tidings in these parts, the French king lieth at siege at St. Omers, on the one side of the town, a mile off, but he hath no great ordnance there; and they of the town skirmish with them every day, and keep a passage half a mile without the town; and the French king hath brenned (*burnt*) all the towns and fair abbeys that were that way about St. Omers, and also the corns which are there.

And also, as it is said for certain, the French king hath brenned Cassell,[3] that is my old Lady of Burgundy's[4] jointure, and all the country thereabout, whereby she hath lost a great part of her livelihood; and that is a shrewd token that he meaneth[5] well to the king our sovereign lord, when he intendeth to destroy her.

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[1] Between 5*l.* and 6*l.* English, apparently a great price for a hobby.

[2] Ponton de Santrailles. A nobleman of this name was taken prisoner by the Duke of Bedford, before Beauvais, and was exchanged for Lord Talbot when he was captured at the battle of Pataie.

[3] A town situated about 10 miles N.E. of St Omers.

[4] Margaret, sister to Edward IV.

[5] This seems to be spoken in irony.

Moreover, Sir Philip de Creveker[1] hath taken them that were in Fynes[2] within this four days to the number of fourteen persons, and the remanent were fled, and he had them to the French king, and he hath brenned all the place, and pulled down the tower and a part of the wall, and destroyed it.

And as it is said, if the French king cannot get St. Omers, that he intendeth to bring his army through these Marches into Flanders, wherefore my lord hath do broken (*caused to be broken*) all the passages except Newham Bridge, which is watched, and the turnpike shut every night.

And the said French king within these three days railed greatly of (*on*) my lord to Tyger Poursuivant, openly before two hundred of his folks; wherefore it is thought here that he would feign a quarrel to set upon this town if he might get advantage.

And as I understand, the emperor's[3] son is married at Ghent as this day; and there came with him but four hundred horse, and I can hear of no more that be coming in certain; and in money he bringeth with him an hundred thousand ducats,[4] which is but a small thing in regard for that he hath to do; wherefore I fear me sore that Flanders will be lost; and if St. Omers be won, all is gone in my conceit; nevertheless they say there should come great power after the emperor's son, but I believe it not because they have been so long of coming.

And I pray you to recommend me unto Sir Terry Robsart,[5] and that it please you to let him know of your tidings, and our Lord have you in his keeping.

At Calais, the Sunday next after the Assumption.

Your
EDMUND BEDYNGFELD.[6]

Calais, Sunday,
17th of August, 1477. 17 E. IV.

LETTER CCCCI.—(XLVII. vol. v. p. 207.)

[WILLIAM PEACOCK, the agent or steward at Mauteby, writes to his master Sir John Paston of several matters connected with his employment. The first seems to be the collecting of evidence for some matter in which Sir John was only partly interested, for he calls it "Pickering's matter," and in this he appears to have been very unsuccessful, for on applying to a certain friar in Pickering's name, his messenger received for answer, that if he (the friar) "had a bushelfull of evidence, he should none have of them, for he (Pickering) had set the land in trouble, nor he could have no sight of none." Peacock then proceeds to remind his master of his right of wreck at Winterton. This right of wreck, a right still inherent in many manors, seems at this time to have been very extensive; as from the quantities of timber, &c., alleged to have been stolen, the wreck in this case must have been almost the entire ship and cargo. Peacock says "these are the men's names of Winterton, Robert Parker of West-Somerton, John Loneyard of Winterton, Thomas Woodknape of the same, William Wrantham and John Curteys of the same Winterton, that

[1] [This is the Count of Crevecœur, rendered so celebrated by Walter Scott's novel of 'Quentin Durward.']

[2] [Furnes in West Flanders.]

[3] Maximilian, son of the emperor Frederick, married Mary, daughter and heir of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy.—She was the richest heiress of her time, and had been promised by her father to many princes, and amongst the number to this prince, whom she now chose for herself.—She was about 19 years of age at the time of her marriage, in August, 1477, and lived only five or six years after it.

[4] A ducat of gold is worth about 10*s*.—Of silver, nearly 5*s*.

[5] Sir Terry Robsart, knight, of Sidistern, in Norfolk, by the marriage of his daughter Lucy to Edward Walpole, Esq., became an ancestor to the Earls of Orford.

[6] Edmund Bedyngfeld married Margaret, daughter of Sir John Scott, comptroller of Calais, and was created a Knight of the Bath at the coronation of Richard III. He was highly in favour with Henry VII., who paid him a royal visit at Oxburgh, in Norfolk; which fine seat he built.—He died in 1496.

carried off your several ground twenty-two cartsfull of stuff, eight score bow-staves, three score and seven wainscoats, fourteen hundred clepalde,[1] five barrels of tar, four couple of oars, and great plenty of wreck of the ship, as ye shall understand the truth after this." The rest of the letter is of minor matters: he informs Sir John that the "herrings that should into Essex, are there by the grace of God," the cost having been 4*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.* beside other costs; this sum must have purchased a very large quantity of herrings at this time, the price of a horse-load being stated to be 4*s.* 6*d.* in Letter lxxv. (vol. i. p. 57). Fenn guesses they were for winter provisions, but Paston had no residence in Essex. Swans are also promised to be sent into Essex by the Lady-day following; and he complains that "I sold yet no barley, nor none can above fourteen pence the comb." The letter is written at Mauteby on Sunday, November 30, 1477.]

LETTER CCCCII.—(LXXXII. vol. ii. p. 257.)

[John Paston is at length married, and to Margery Brews; who is living, not with her parents according to one of the proposed arrangements, but at Oxnead, one of the residences of the family, and part of the jointure of Agnes Paston, her husband being at this time in London. It is a pretty simple letter, very characteristic of a young wife. Sir John Fenn queries whether the date assigned to it is right, or whether "our Lady's day" and "Saint Thomas's day" may not mean the visitation of the Virgin Mary, July 2, and the translation of St. Thomas à Becket, July 7, 1478. We think the present date right from the following circumstances; the next letter is from her husband, mentioning her removal to the house of her father and mother on account of her situation, and is dated Jan. 21, 1477-8; and though Sir John does not write till August, 1478, to congratulate his brother on the birth of an heir, yet he complains of the delay which had taken place in informing him of the event.]

To my right reverend and worshipful husband, John Paston.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful husband, I recommend me to you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, thanking you for the token that ye sent me by Edmund Perys, praying you to weet that my mother sent to my father to London for a gown cloth of mustyrddevyllers[2] to make of a gown for me; and he told my mother and me when he was come home, that he charged you to buy it after that he was come out of London. I pray you, if it be not bought, that you will vouchsafe to buy it and send it home as soon as ye may, for I have no gown to wear this winter but my black and my green a lyer,[3] and that is so cumbrous that I am weary to wear it.

As for the girdle that my father behested (*promised*) me, I spake to him thereof a little before he yed (*went*) to London last, and he said to me that the fault was in you that ye would not think thereupon to do make it (*to have it made*), but I suppose it is not so, said it but for a skeusacion (*an excuse*); I pray you, if ye dare take it upon you, that ye will vouchsafe to do make it against ye come home, for I had never more need thereof than I have now, for I have waxed so fetys (*prettily*) that I may not be girt[4] in no bar of no

[1] [Wainscoats were planks (probably oak) for lining the walls of rooms; clepaldes or clapboards were boards cut ready for making casks.]

[2] This word occurs more than once in these letters, but the meaning of it I cannot ascertain to my own satisfaction; though perhaps it refers to some place in France where the cloth was manufactured. The following, however, appears the most satisfactory explanation: Musterdevelers — mustyrddevyllers, *moitie*, or (as sometimes anciently and erroneously spelt) *mestier de velours*, French, a half-velvet; or *mestis de velours*, a bastard-velvet. *Mestoyant* is also an old French word, signifying *between both*. On the present occasion, a proper allowance must be made for the imperfections of female spelling, in an age of unsettled orthography. [In vol. i. p. 83, the word is spelt *musterdevelers*. In Rymer's 'Fœdera,' in a list of articles shipped from England for the use of the King of Portugal and the Countess of Holland in 1428, two pieces of *mustrevilers* and two pieces of russet *mustrevilers* are enumerated.]

[3] Qu. grenouilliere, frog-colour?

[4] The same very natural thought occurs in the ancient ballad of 'Child Waters.' See Percy's Collection, 3rd edit. vol iii. p. 55.

"My girdle of gold that was too longe,
Is now too short for mee."

girdle that I have but of one. Elizabeth Peverel hath lain sick fifteen or sixteen weeks of the sciatica, but she sent my mother word by Kate that she should come hither when God sent time, though she should be crod (*carried*) in a barrow.

John of Damme was here, and my mother discovered me to him, and he said by his truth that he was not gladder of nothing that he heard this twelvemonth than he was thereof.

I may no longer live by my craft (*cunning*), I am discovered of all men that see me.

Of all other things that ye desired that I should send you word of, I have sent you word of in a letter that I did write on our Lady's day[1] last was; the Holy Trinity have you in his keeping.

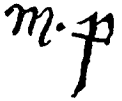
Written at Oxnead, in right good haste, on the Thursday next before Saint Thomas's day.[2]

I pray you that ye will wear the ring[3] with the image of Saint Margaret that I sent you for a remembrance till ye come home. Ye have left me such a remembrance that maketh me to think upon you both day and night when I would sleep.

Yours,

MARGERY PASTON.

Oxnead,
Thursday, 18th of December,
1477. 17 E. IV.



[1] Conception of our Lady, 8th of December.

[2] [Dec. 21.]

[3] This ring, bearing the image of her favourite saint, being worn by her husband as a remembrance, might be looked upon as a guardian to her in her then situation, and be a means of preserving her from any disagreeable accident.

LETTER CCCCIII.—(XLVIII. vol. v. p. 209.)

[JOHN PASTON in this letter advises his brother Sir John to conclude his matters now, if possible, with the Duke of Suffolk, probably matters relating to the contested property at Heylesdon and elsewhere, because "an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) will do more in their need than ye shall peradventure do with two hundred marks in time coming," some of the Duke of Suffolk's folks having "let me in secret wise have knowledge that he (the Duke) must make a shift for money, and that in all haste;" and the Duchess is said to be the person to treat with, "as for my lord, he needeth not to be moved till it shall be as good as ready for the sealing." John Paston next informs his brother that the priest of the newly-founded chapel at Caister had written by an attorney for an account and payment of his profits, and suggests that as "ye said unto me that ye would assay to make a bargain with him so that ye might have a priest to sing in Caister; Sir, methink ye cannot have so good a season to move him with it as now this parliament time, for now I think he shall be awaiting on the queen;[4] and also if ye might compound with him ere he wist what the value were, it were the better." He says, "We would fain hear of all your royalty at London, as of the marriage of my Lord of York." This was the marriage of the younger son of Edward IV. to Ann Mowbray, the daughter and heiress of John Duke of Norfolk, who died very young, and which took place on Jan. 15, 1477-8, and fixes the correctness of the date of this letter. He then concludes, "And, Sir, as for my housewife, I am fain to carry her to see her father and her friends now this winter, for I trow she will be out of fashion (*shape*) in summer." The letter is written from the house of Playters, where he stayed in his progress "from my father Brews unto Mauteby," and is dated Jan. 21, 17 Edward IV., 1477-8.]

[4] [The priest of Caister chapel was Dr. Yotton, chaplain also to the queen.]

LETTER CCCCIV.—(XLIX. vol. v. p. 213.)

[JOHN PASTON writes to his mother from Swainsthorp, informing her of his having made an appointment for her with James Hubbart and Dr. Pykenham at Norwich during the week after Midlent Sunday, for the purpose of advising her on certain matters relating to her property; and in a postscript tells her she ought to be in Norwich five or six days before the lawyers, to look up her evidences and all other things; probably her title-deeds connected with the property disputed between her and the Duke of Suffolk. Being now married himself, John Paston seems to have been employing his talents for match-making in favour of his brother Edmund; and he writes to his mother—"I heard while I was in London where was a goodly young woman to marry, which was daughter to one Seff, a mercer, and she shall have 200*l.* in money to her marriage, and twenty marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) by year of land, after the decease of a step-mother of hers, which is upon fifty years of age; and ere I departed out of London I spake with some of the maid's friends, and have gotten their good wills to have her married to my brother Edmund: notwithstanding those friends of the maid's that I communed with advised me to get the good will of one Sturmyn, which is in Master Pykenham's danger (*debt*) so much that he is glad to please him. And so I moved this matter to Master Pykenham, and incontinently he sent for Sturmyn, and delivered his good will for my brother Edmund; and he granted him his good will, so that he could get the good will of the remanent that were executors to Seff as well as the said Sturmyn was; and thus far forth is the matter." He then requests a letter from his mother in favour of Edmund to Dr. Pykenham, and he says—"and, for I am acquainted with your conditions of old, that ye reck not who inditeth more letters than ye, therefore I have drawn a note to your secretary's hand, Friar Perse, which letter we must pray you to send us by the bearer hereof, and I trust it shall not be long from Master Pykenham." John Paston seems to have been possessed with a most active spirit of intrigue. Edmund Paston was at this time staying at Swainsthorp, which, however, his brother says "for none interest that his hostess your daughter nor I could intreat him, might not keep him but that he would have been at home with you at Mauteby on Sunday last past at night; and as he was departing from hence had we word from French's wife that, God yeld (*thank*) you, mother, ye had given him leave to disport him here with us for a seven or eight days, and so the drevyll (*simpleton*) lost his thank of us and yet abode nevertheless. Your daughter sendeth you part of such poor stuff as I sent her from London, beseeching you to take it in gree (*favour*), though it be little plenty that she sendeth you; but as for dates, I will say truth, ye have not so many by two pounds as were meant unto you, for she thinks at this season dates right good meat, whatsoever it meaneth, I pray God send good tidings." Fenn says that dates were formerly considered wholesome for ladies in Margery Paston's situation, and at any rate the notice is curious. The letter is dated Ash Wednesday, Feb. 4, 1477-8.]

LETTER CCCCV.—(XXII. vol. i. p. 297.)

[This letter combines very curiously an account of the writer's schoolboy studies and progress with that of his courtship and a description of his mistress. Besides an interesting picture of the domestic manners of the time, it proves, as is remarked by Hallam in his 'State of Europe during the Middle Ages,' vol. iii. p. 597, "that Latin versification was taught at Eton as early as the beginning of Edward the IVth's reign. It is true that the specimen he (Master Wm. Paston) rather proudly exhibits, does not much differ from what we denominate nonsense verses. But a more material observation is, that the sons of country gentlemen living at

a considerable distance were already sent to public schools for grammatical education." We may add, W. Paston was apparently not on the foundation, but sent as a boarder. Fenn says he was "at this time I suppose about eighteen or twenty, a time of life when he might have been better employed than in learning to make verses." True: and he might have been worse employed,—at any rate his letter proves that his attention was not by any means solely directed to this one object. His eyes are open to the charms of youth and beauty, and he seems to have adopted the aristocratic feeling in favour of slender hands; while he is by no means dull to the dictates of worldly prudence.]

To his worshipful brother, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT reverend and worshipful brother, after all duties of recommendation I recommend me to you, desiring to hear of your prosperity and welfare, which I pray God long to continue to his pleasure and to your heart's desire; letting you weet that I received a letter from you, in the which letter was 8*d.* with the which I should buy a pair of slippers.

Farthermore certifying you as for the 13*s.* 4*d.* which ye sent by a gentleman's man for my board, called Thomas Newton, was delivered to mine hostess, and so to my creancer (*creditor*), Mr. Thomas Stevenson; and he heartily recommended him to you; also ye sent me word in the letter of 12lb. of figgs[1] and 8lb. of raisins; I have them not delivered, but I doubt not I shall have, for Alweder told me of them, and he said that they came after in another barge.

And as for the young gentlewoman, I will certify you how I first fell in acquaintance with her; her father is dead, there be two sisters of them, the elder is just wedded; at which wedding I was with mine hostess, and also desired (*invited*) by the gentleman himself, called William Swan, whose dwelling is in Eton. So it fortuned that mine hostess reported on me otherwise than I was worthy,[2] so that her mother commanded her to make me good cheer, and so in good faith she did; she is not abiding where she is now, her dwelling is in London; but her mother and she came to a place of hers five miles from Eton where the wedding was, for because it was nigh to the gentleman which wedded her daughter; and on Monday next coming, that is to say, the first Monday of Clean Lent,[3] her mother and she will go to the pardon at Sheene, and so forth to London, and there to abide in a place of hers in Bow Churchyard; and if it please you to inquire of her, her mother's name is Mistress Alborow, the name of the daughter is Margaret Alborow, the age of her is, by all likelyhood, eighteen or nineteen years at the farthest; and as for the money and plate, it is ready whensoever she were wedded; but as for the livelihood, I trow (*I believe*) not till after her mother's decease, but I cannot tell you for very certain, but you may know by inquiring.

And as for her beauty, judge you that when you see her, if so be that ye take the labour; and specially behold her hands, for and if it be as it is told me, she is disposed to be thick.

And as for my coming from Eton, I lack nothing but versifying, which I trust to have with a little continuance.

Quare, Quomodo. Non valet hora, valet mora.
Unde dī
Arbore jam videas exemplum. Non die possunt
Omnia suppleri, sed tū illa mora.[4]

[1] These were for his subsistence in Lent.

[2] [Beyond what I was worthy of.]

[3] In 1479 the first Sunday in Lent fell on the 28th of February, which agrees with the date, St. Mathias being on the 24th of February. Sheen is now called Richmond, so named by Henry VII.

[4] Of these verses I can make nothing; but an ingenious friend has attempted the following solution:—

Quære, Quomodo non valet hora, valet mora?
Unde dictum vel deductum?
Arbore jam videas exemplum. Non die possunt
Omnia suppleri; sed tamen illa mora.

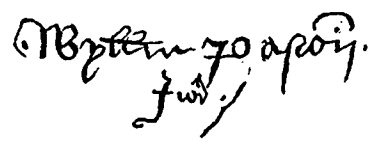
Perhaps the words preceding young Paston's attempt at a distich exhibit only a common theme given out at school, with some formulary query annexed to it. On this theme the hexameter and pentameter appear to have been written. It is needless to particularise their defect in quantity, &c. That versification, however, was attended to in our public schools, at this early period, may be ascertained by such imperfect lines, as well as by a more correct performance.

And these two verses aforesaid be of mine own making.
No more to you at this time, but God have you in his keeping.

Written at Eton the even of Saint Mathias the Apostle, in haste, with the hand of your brother.

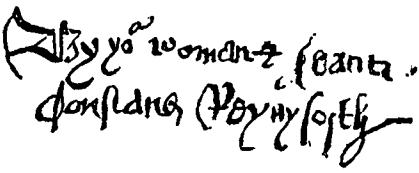
WILLIAM PASTON, *junior*.

Eton,
Wednesday, 23d of February,
1478-9. 18 E. IV.



LETTER CCCCVI.—(L. vol. v. p. 221.)

[THIS is a very strange letter. The writer, after recommending herself in the usual style, proceeds thus: "Touching the cause of my writing to your mastership is, forasmuch as I appointed with you to have been with you by the day that ye assigned me of, the which, without your good supportation, I cannot well have mine intent, without it please you to send one of your men to me, and I shall provide a letter in mine uncle's name, the which he shall deliver to my cousin as (*if*) he were my uncle's messenger; and by this mean I will come at your request, for my cousin would I should not depart with him (*leave him*), without it were to mine uncle's service; his and all others I refuse for yours, if my simple service may be to your pleasure; and of an answer hereof I beseech you by the bringer of my bill, and I will conform me to your intent by the grace of God, the which mot (*may*) preserve you at all hours." Signed "By your woman and servant, CONSTANCE RENNYFORTH," Cobham, Saturday, March 21, 1477-8. By this lady Sir John had a natural daughter, to whom her mother left ten marks, by will, dated Feb. 4, 1481, on her coming of age; she afterwards appears to have resided with her uncle John Paston, then Sir John, between 1495 and 1500, and to have been sought in marriage by John Clippesby, of Oby, Esq., as appears from another letter given in the Fifth Vol. of the quarto edition, of the reign of Henry VII. Sir John Fenn says "The style of this letter is artless and simple, but the lady's contrivance by a forged letter, as from her uncle to her cousin, to leave him and to go to Sir John, shows she understood what she had undertaken, and that her attachment to him got the better of every other consideration." Artless and simple! He adds "no one can read this letter without feeling an interest in the welfare of her writer." To us the style of language, so obscure and involved, and the spelling, which is not very good in the original, seems rather that of a bold and perhaps vulgar woman; and Sir John is here strangely at issue with his own remarks, upon which we made a few observations in Letter ccxlvii. vol. i. p. 199.]



LETTER CCCCVII.—(LXXXIII. vol. ii. p. 261.)

It appears by this letter that Sir John Paston feared that his mother would not send the cloth of gold to him lest he should sell it, and not apply the money to the purpose of erecting a tomb to the memory of his

father, who had now been dead twelve years. He was buried very sumptuously in Bromholm Priory; and probably a suitable tomb should have been immediately erected, but had been deferred by Sir John from time to time on account of the expense.

To my right worshipful mother, Margaret Paston, be this delivered.

PLEASE it you to weet, that whereas I intended to have been at home this Midsummer, and purposed with your good help to have begun upon my father's tomb so that it might have been ended this summer; it is so, that for such causes as are now begun between my Lord of Suffolk and me for the manors of Heylesdon, Drayton, &c., for which matters I must needs be here this next term; therefore I deem it would be after Midsummer ere than (*before*) I can see you.

Please it you also to weet that I communed with Master Pykenham to weet if he would buy the cloth of gold for so much as he desired once to have bought it, and he offered me once 20 marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) therefor, nevertheless it cost me 24*l.*; yet now, when that I spake to him thereof, he refused to buy it; and said that he had now so many charges that he may not.

But it is so that the king doth make certain copes and vestments of like cloth, which he intendeth to give to the college of Fotheringay where my Lord his father is now buried, and he buyeth at a great price; I communed with the vestment maker for to help me forth with twelve yards, and he hath granted to do as Wheatley can tell you; wherefore if it please you that it be bestowed for to make a tomb for my father at Bromholm, if ye like to send it hither, if it be sold I undertake ere Michaelmas that there shall be a tomb and somewhat else over my father's grave, on whose soul God have mercy, that there shall none be like it in Norfolk; and as ye shall be glad hereafter to see it; and God send me leisure that I may come home, and if I do not, yet the money shall be put to none other use, but kept by some that ye trust till that it may be bestowed according as is above written, and else I give you cause never to trust me while ye and I live.

When I was last with you, ye granted that the said cloth of gold should be bewared (*expended in exchange*) about this work that is above written, which, if ye will perform, I undertake that there shall be such a tomb as ye shall be pleased at, though it cost me 20 marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) of mine own purse beside, if I once set upon it.

No more, but I beseech God have you in his keeping.

Written at London the Wednesday in Whitsun-week, in the 18th year of Edward IV.

Please it you to send me word by Wheatley of your pleasure herein.

By your son,
JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

London,
Wednesday, 13th of May,
1478. 18 E. IV.

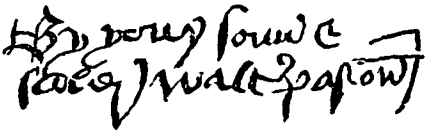
LETTER CCCCVIII.—(LI. vol. v. p. 225.)

[WALTER PASTON writes to his mother Margaret from Oxford relative to his expenses there. He says, "I marvel sore that you sent me no word of the letter which I sent to you by Master William Brown at Easter. I sent you word that time that I should send you mine expenses particularly; but as at this time the bearer hereof had a letter suddenly that he should come home, and therefore I could have no leisure to send them you on that wise, and therefore I shall write to you in this letter the whole sum of my expenses since I was with you till Easter last past, and also the receipts, reckoning the twenty shillings that I had of you to Oxon wards with the bishop's finding:—

	£.	s.	d.
The whole sum of receipts is	5	17	6
And the whole sum of expenses is	6	5	5¾
And that [*what*] cometh over my receipts and my expenses I have borrowed of Master Edmund, and it draweth to	0	8	0

and yet I reckon none expenses since Easter,

but as for them they be not great." Fenn says, "Had this letter contained a particular account of Walter Paston's expenses at Oxford it would have been more curious; we must, however, take it as we find it, and be content with knowing that he had expended 6*l.* 5*s.* 5¾*d.* from the time he left his mother to Easter last, which this year fell on the 22nd March, from which time it was now two months, and of the expenses 'since incurred' he says 'they be not great.' We may therefore conclude the former account was from the Michaelmas preceding, and a moderate one; if so we may fairly estimate his university education at 100*l.* a-year of our present money. I mean that 12*l.* 10*s.* 11½*d.* would then procure as many necessaries and comforts as 100*l.* will at this day." This letter is dated Tuesday, May 19, 1478, and is signed "By your sonn and scoler, Walter Paston." We add the autograph.



LETTER CCCCIX.—(LII. vol. v. p. 229.)

[J. WHETLEY (or Wheatley) here writes a long letter to Sir John Paston, "lodged at the sign of the George at Paul's Wharf in London," about divers matters connected with the litigated titles to Heylesdon and Drayton manors. He says, "First, your subpœna to Denton was delivered by me on Trinity Sunday in his parish church at matins time, before all the substance of the parish." The serving of a subpœna on a Sunday in service time, and publicly, is a very curious circumstance, and it is not mentioned as being at all out of the ordinary course: when personal feelings or interests were involved the clergy seem to have been treated with as little ceremony as the laity. He then proceeds to describe the proceedings at Drayton and Heylesdon, and gives us a lively sketch of the Duke of Suffolk's blustering bearing and manners, seeming to have out-Heroded Herod. "As for Drayton wood it is not all down yet, but it draws fast toward. I have the names of all the ministers (*servants or agents*) of and in that wood, and more shall know ere I come if there be any more dealing, &c. And as for Heylesdon, my Lord of Suffolk[1] was there on Wednesday in Whitsun week (*13th May*), and there dined, and drew a stew, and took great plenty of

[1] John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, married Elizabeth, third daughter of Richard Plantagenet, and sister of Edward IV. They both lie buried at Wingfield, in Suffolk. [In the previous volume, at page 19, we have stated that Fenn was in error as to the monuments of the De la Poles; but we are glad to be able to do him the justice to say that the error is not in his statement, but in those of Stothard and the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' as there quoted. By the favour of a gentleman resident at Wingfield, we learn that there exists, on vellum, "an exact account of the Delapoles, collected 1684 by William Bedford, perpetual curate of Wingfield," which formerly hung in a frame in the church. It is there stated of Duke William, that "his body was cast up at Dover, and buried at the Charter-house at Hull; but after, the body was translated, and honourably interred in the church of Wingfield in Suffolk. This Duke William is represented by the figure that lieth alone on the north side of the chancel of Wingfield." Weever, in his 'Ancient Funeral Monuments,' 1631, says, on the authorities of Hall and the 'Catalogue of Honours,' by Brooke, that Duke William was "brought to this college, and here honourably interred;" but he makes no mention of the monument. Gough, in his 'Sepulchral Monuments,' 1786 and 1796, thus describes it:—

"In the north wall of the chancel at Wingfield, without the rails, under a purfled arch with a bouquet on the point, and a quatrefoil in the pediment, on a freestone altar tomb, lies a freestone figure of an armed knight, with whiskers, pointed helmet, gorget of mail, gauntlets, square-toed shoes, no sword or dagger, lion at his feet, and under his head a helmet without a crest; four plain quatrefoils, with shields on the front of the tomb."

Stothard has given this figure in his 'Monumental Effigies,' but calls it the effigies of a Wingfield of Letheringham; and in a second engraving, representing the "details, with the figure as originally painted," he has depicted on the sword-belt the arms of Wingfield in conformity with this idea, but for which the monument itself gives not the slightest authority; for the correspondent to whom we have already acknowledged our obligation says, "I can discover no appearance of arms of any kind on any part of the figure, nor can I see anything

fish; yet hath he left you a pike or two again ye come, the which would be great comfort to all your friends and discomfort to your enemies; for at his being there that day there was never no man that played Herod in Corpus Christi play[1] better, and more agreeable to his pageant, than he did; but ye shall understand that it was afternoon and the weather hot, and he so feeble for sickness that his legs would not bear him, but there was two men had great pain to keep him on his feet; and there ye were judged. Some said 'slay,' some said 'put him in prison;' and forth come my lord, and he would meet you with a spear, and have none other mends (*amends*) for that trouble as ye have put him to but your heart's blood, and that will he get with his own hands; for and (*if*) ye have Heylesdon and Drayton ye shall have his life with it; and so he comforted your enemies with that word that they have dealed and dealeth with the wood; and (*the*) most principal now is Nicholas Ovy, for as for Farrer[2] the mayor he deals not without it be under covert; for it is said that he besought my lord that he might have other assignments for his money that he had paid, for plainly he would deal no more with the wood; and so my lord hath set in the bailiff of Cossey: and all is done in his name; and as for his servants, they daily threat my master your brother and me to slay for *coming on their lord's ground*; and they say that we made aventure, and they be answered as ye commanded me, for many a great challenge make they to Master John, both Master Wodehouse, Wiseman, with other divers that I know not their names, but he holdeth his own that they get no ground of him; and this he lets them know, that if they beat him or any of his they shall abide (*suffer*) six for one, and so they deal not but with their tongues; and as yet, since Farrer was at London, there passes not three acres of wood down, but they carry fast for fear of rain." It is also added, farther on, that Farrer is said to have denied being aware that Sir J. Paston had an interest in the manors, and also that "Wiseman was bound to Farrer to save him harmless, and he had for bringing that matter about, that Farrer should have the wood, twenty shillings." This we suppose was on account of the difficulty of getting a customer from the generally-known disputed title to the property. Wheatley then mentions that he had applied to one Popy for money claimed from him by Paston, "which as he (Popy) saith is a strange thing to him," for as it appears the person who owed the debt was his uncle; but he was, it seems, not unwilling to pay a part for a release from the whole, like a wise man, rather than be probably involved in a law-suit. Wheatley next states that Worcester (or Botoner) is again moving as to Sir J. Fastolf's affairs, but he does not write fully, as he expects to be with Sir John in about a week, "without I may have more comfort of money than I have yet." He adds, "And as for my mistress, your mother, (*she*) hath been greatly diseased and so sick that she weened to have died, and hath made her will, the which ye shall understand more when I come, for there is every man for himself; I know not the circumstance of every thing as yet, and therefore I write no more to you therein, but I am promised to know ere I depart from thence." This will never took effect, as the one proved after her death was dated Feb. 4, 1481. This long and interesting letter is dated from Norwich, May 20, 1478.]

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like an inscription." Stothard has also added, on the authority of Weever, a mutilated inscription, as belonging to this tomb: "Hic jacet Dominus Wingfield de Letheringham . . . . . cujus anime." But both Weever and Gough distinctly separate the monument and the inscriptions. Weever says, some sentences after mentioning the three Dukes of Suffolk, "In the *parish church* are these *inscriptions* or *epitaphs*:—

Ric. de la Pole } sons of Mich.
Johan. de la Pole } de la Pole.
Dom. Wingfield de Letheringham," &c.

This, however, has probably been the foundation of the mistake; and we are not aware that the writer of the article in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' had any other authority than Stothard's. That the effigy is in truth that of the unfortunate William de la Pole is still farther confirmed, as our correspondent observes, by the use of the lion at the feet, as in the other De la Pole monuments.]

[1] [The old mysteries or miracle plays. Corpus Christi day is the Thursday after the octave of Whitsuntide, a time when the mysteries were frequently performed.]

[2] [Richard Farrer, or Ferriour, was five times mayor of Norwich, in 1473, 1478, 1483, 1493, and 1498.]

LETTER CCCCX.—(LXXXIV. vol. ii. p. 265.)

The following is indorsed, "Lrā Johi Paston mil p. quā patet." "Se fore in magno favore Regis." This letter is in answer to that of Sir John Paston to his mother, dated 13th of May, 1478, and shows the desire that she had that some tomb should be erected over her husband's grave. [The mention of Clere expending 100*l.* upon the desks in the choir is very curious: the sum is large, but was probably for the rich though sometimes grotesque carvings so profusely lavished or some of our ancient religious edifices. Her advice regarding the marriage is also noticeable, if only for the kindly womanly feeling that breaks out through the other selfish motives suggested by her, "if ye can find in your heart to love her."]

To the right worshipful Sir John Paston, Knight.

I GREET you well, and send you God's blessing and mine; letting you weet that I have sent you by Wheatley the cloth of gold, charging you that it be not sold to none other use than to the performing of your father's tomb as ye send me word in writing; if ye sell it to any other use, by my troth, I shall never trust you while I live.

Remember that it cost me 20 marks (13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) the pledging out of it, and if I were not glad to see that made, I would not depart from it. Remember you what charge I have had with you of late, which will not be for my ease this two years; when ye may, better, I trust ye will remember it.

My cousin Clere[1] doth as much cost at Bromholm as will draw an 100*l.* upon the desks in the choir, and in other places, and Heydon in likewise, and if there should nothing be done for your father it would be too great a shame for us all, and in chief to see him lie as he doth.

Also as I understand it, my cousin Robert Clere thinketh great unkindness in dealing with him of Peacock, for certain pasture that ye granted him to have, and Peacock hath let it to others, such as he list to let it to, notwithstanding my cousin hath laid the pasture with his cattle, and Peacock hath distrained them. I think this dealing is not as it should be: I would that each of you should do for other, and live as kinsmen and friends; for such servants may make trouble betwixt you, which were against courtesy, so nigh neighbours as ye be. He is a man of substance and worship, and so will be taken in this shire; and I were loath that ye should lose the good will of such as may do for you.

Item, whereas ye have begun your claim in Heylesdon and Drayton, I pray God send you good speed and furtherance in it; ye have as good a season as ye would wish, considering that your adversary stands not in best favour with the king.

Also ye have the voice in this country, that ye may do as much with the king as any knight that is belonging to the court; if it be so, I pray God continue it; and also that ye should marry right nigh of the queen's blood;[2] what she is we are not as certain, but if it be so that your land should come again by the reason of your marriage, and to be set in rest, at the reverence of God forsake it not if ye can find in your heart to love her, so that she be such one as ye can think to have issue by, or else my by troth I had rather that ye never married in your life.

Also, if your matter take not now to good effect, ye and all your friends may repent them that ye began your claim, without that ye have taken such a sure way as may be to your intent, for many inconveniences that may fall thereof; God send you good speed in all your matters.

Written at Mauteby, the day after Saint Austin,[3] in May, the 18th year of King Edward IV.

By your mother.

Mauteby,
Tuesday, 26th of May,
1478. 18 E. IV.

[1] William or Thomas Clere; they both died without issue, and were succeeded by Robert their next brother, who was knighted in 1494 and died in 1529. The advice which she gives her son respecting his behaviour towards this gentleman shows her to be a woman of sense and discernment.

[2] Some lady of the Woodvile or Widville family.

[3] St. Augustine, 25th of May.

LETTER CCCCXI.—(LXXXV. vol. ii. p. 271.)

We see by this account the methods practised by the great men of the time to get possession of estates and benefices; and we are informed of the king's intention of sitting as a judge to try a criminal. The anecdotes likewise of the Earl of Oxford are curious.

To John Paston, Esq., be this letter delivered, or to my mistress, his wife, at Norwich, to deliver to him.

Brother John, I recommend me to you, and I thank God, my sister your wife, and you, of my fair nephew Christopher, which I understand ye have, whereof I am right glad, and I pray God send you many if it be his pleasure; nevertheless ye be not kind that ye send me no weeting thereof; I had knowledge by footmen or ever ye could find any messenger on horseback to bring me word thereof.

Sir, it is so that the Duke of Buckingham[1] shall come on pilgrimage to Walsingham, and so to Bokenham Castle to my lady his sister:[2] and then it is supposed, that he shall to my Lady of Norfolk,[3] and mine uncle William cometh with him; and he telleth me that there is like to be trouble in the manor of Oxnead; wherefore I pray you take heed lest that the Duke of Suffolk's council play therewith now at the vacation of the benefice,[4] as they did with the benefice of Drayton, which by the help of Master John Salett and Donne his man, there was a quest made by the said Donne, that found that the Duke of Suffolk was very patron, which was false, yet they did it for an evidence; but now if any such prat (*practice*) should be laboured it is I hope in better case, for such a thing must needs be found before Master John Smyth, who is our old friend; wherefore I pray you labour him, that, if need be, he may do us a friend's turn therein.

Item, both ye and I must needs take this matter as our own, and it were for none other cause but for our good grandam's sake; nevertheless ye wrote well, that there is another entress (*interest*) longing to us after her decease; if there be any such thing begun there by such a fryer or priest, as it is said, I marvel that ye sent me no word thereof: but ye have now wife and child, and so much to care for that ye forget me.

As for tidings here, I hear tell that my cousin Sir Robert Chamberlain hath entered the manor of Scolton upon your bedfellow Conyers,[5] whereof ye send me no word.

Item, young William Brandon[6] is arrested for that he should have by force ravished an old gentlewoman, and yet was not therewith eased, but ravished her eldest daughter, and then would have ravished the other sister both; wherefore men say foul of him, and that he would eat the hen and all her chickens; and some say that the king intendeth to sit upon him, and men say he is like to be hanged, for he hath wedded a widow.[7]

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[1] Henry Stafford. He was beheaded in 1483, 1 Richard III.

[2] Joan, sister to Henry Duke of Buckingham, was the second wife of Sir William Knevet, *knight*, of Bokenham Castle, Norfolk.

[3] Elizabeth, widow of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.

[4] Agnes Paston, grandmother to Sir John, presented Thomas Everard to the rectory of Oxnead in 1475, and in 1479 she again presented William Barthulmew, so that the Duke of Suffolk either did not attempt to disturb her right, or at least did not succeed if he endeavoured to do it.

[5] [The custom of sleeping together seems not to have been uncommon in this or even a later age, and to have generally implied a great degree of confidence and friendship. Shakspere has more than once alluded to the custom, and Malone characterised it as "unseemly;" but, as the editor of the 'Pictorial Shakspere' truly observes, "customs are unseemly, for the most part, when they are opposed to the general usages of society, and to the state of public opinion. The necessity for two persons occupying one bed belonged to an age when rooms were large and furniture scanty."—*Histories*, vol. i. p. 341.]

[6] We are not told who this William Brandon was, therefore it must remain uncertain whether he was related to Sir William Brandon or not. [Jas. Pettit Andrews, in his 'Anecdotes,' alludes to this as an instance of the early existence of the class of silly and profligate young men who, at different periods, under the names of bucks, bloods, mohawks, and swells, have endeavoured to attain notoriety by sacrificing all common sense and decency, and publicly committing follies and crimes alike mean and mischievous; and for which many, we have no doubt, have no taste whatever, and no motive but a morbid vanity craving for public attention.]

[7] His being already a married man was certainly an aggravation of his crime.

Item, as for the pageant that men say that the Earl of Oxford hath played at Hammes, I suppose ye have heard thereof; it is so long ago, I was not in this country when the tidings came, therefore I sent you no word thereof; but for conclusion, as I hear say, he leaped the walls, and went to the dyke, and into the dyke to the chin; to what intent I cannot tell; some say to steal away, and some think he would have drowned himself, and so it is deemed.

No more, but I am not certain whether I shall come home in haste or not.

Written at London, the day next St. Bartholomew,[1] in the eighteenth year of Edward IV.

JOHN PASTON, *knight.*

London, Sunday or Tuesday,
23rd or 25th of August,
1478. 18 E. IV.

LETTER CCCCXII.—(LIII. vol. v. p. 237.)

[WILLIAM PASTON, a younger brother of John's, was born in 1459, and was now about nineteen years of age, and pursuing his studies at Eton. He writes to inquire as to his brother's health, and to thank him for a "noble in gold" which he had received, but goes on to state that "my creanser (*creditor*) Master Thomas (Stevenson) heartily recommendeth him to you, and he prayeth you to send him some money for my commons, for he saith ye be twenty shillings in his debt, for a month was to pay for when he had money last; also I beseech you to send me a hose cloth, one for the holy days of some colour, and another for the working days (how coarse soever it be it maketh no matter), and a stomacher, and two shirts, and a pair of slippers: and if it like you that I may come with Alweder by water, and sport me with you at London a day or two this term-time, then ye may let all this be till the time that I come, and then I will tell you when I shall be ready to come from Eton by the grace of God, who have you in his keeping." Dated from Eton, Nov. 7, 1478.]

LETTER CCCCXIII.—(LIV. vol. v. p. 239.)

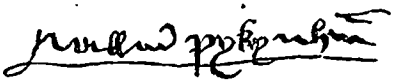
[WILLIAM DE PYKENHAM, who was afterwards chancellor of Norwich and archdeacon of Suffolk, writes in this letter as a friend to Margery Paston, discouraging an attempt apparently desired to be made to force Walter Paston into the church before he was legally eligible. The opinion given seems a sincere and honest one, and the postscript is curious, showing that though bribery in endeavouring to obtain church preferment was common enough to render its offer no matter of surprise or offence, it was not always effectual. He says, "I have received your letter and understand your desire, which is against the law for three causes; one is, for your son Walter is not tonsured, in mother tongue called Benett; another cause, he is not twenty-four years of age, which is required complete; the third, he ought of right to be priest within twelvemonths, after that he is parson,[2] without so were he had a dispensation from Rome, by our Holy Father the Pope, which I am certain cannot be had; therefore I present not your desire unto my lord, lest he would have taken it to a displeasure; or else to take a great simpleness in your desire, which should cause him, in such matters as shall fortune you to speed with him another time, to show unto you the rigour of the law, which I would be loth; therefore present another man able; ask counsel of Master John Smyth, and cease of your desire in this part, for it is not goodly

[1] 24th of August.

[2] This refers to his serving as a curate as a qualification for orders.]

neither godly, and let not your desire be known after my advice: be not wroth, though I send unto you thus plainly in the matter, for I would ye did as well as any woman in Norfolk, that is, with right, to your honour, prosperity, and to the pleasure of God, with you and all yours, who have you in his blessed keeping. From Hoxne on Candlemas-day.

"I send you your present again in the box.
WILLIAM PYKENHAM."]



Hoxne,
Tuesday, Feb. 2, 1478-9.

LETTER CCCCXIV.—(LV. vol. v. p. 243.)

[FROM this letter Walter Paston appears to have removed to Oxford, and his tutor, Edmund Alyard, writes to his mother, Margery Paston, from Oxford, Thursday, March 4, 1478-9, giving certainly a very favourable account of the young man, as follows:—"As for your son Walter, his labour and learning hath been, and is, in the faculty of art, and is well sped therein: and may be bachelor at such time as shall like you, and then to go to law, I can think it to his preferring, but it is not good he know it unto the time he shall change; and as I conceive there shall none have that exhibition to the faculty of law, therefore move ye the executors that at such time as he shall leave it ye may put another in his place, such as shall like you to prefer. If he shall go to law, and be made bachelor of arts before, and ye will have him home this year, then may he be bachelor at Midsummer, and be with you in the vacation, and go to law at Michaelmas."]

LETTER CCCCXV.—(LVI. vol. v. p. 245.)

[WALTER PASTON writes to his brother Sir John for money for his expenses at Oxford; he says,—"I sent a letter to my brother John, certifying my costs, and the causes why that I would proceed, but as I have sent word to my mother, I purpose to tarry now till it be Michaelmas, for, if I tarry till then, some of my costs shall be paid; for I supposed, when that I sent the letter to my brother John, that the queen's brother should have proceeded at Midsummer, and therefore I beseeched her to send me some money, for it will be some cost to me, but not much." The queen's brother here mentioned was no doubt Lionel Wideville, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, in 1482; Fenn says, "It appears from this letter that when any person related to the royal family took any degree in the university, a part of the expenses of those who became graduates at the same time were borne by such personage. It does not appear whether the university fees were so discharged, or whether it related only to the expense attending the feasts given at such time. It most probably related only to the expenses attending the good cheer; and if so, it might be confined to those of the same college only." An inceptor is one admitted to an university degree previous to the usual time, up to which period he is so termed. Walter Paston concludes his letter by inquiring "what is done with the horse I left at Tottenham, and whether the man be content that I had it of or not?" It is dated from Oxford, Saturday, May 22, 1479.]

LETTER CCCCXVI.—(LVII. vol. v. p. 249.)

[THIS is another letter from Walter Paston to his brother John, announcing his being made a B.A., and noticing a reproach of his brother as to not complying with his request of writing how he got on. The letter, he says, did not contain such a request, and was not received till too late if it had. The delay is thus accounted for:—"Master Brown had that same

time much money in a bag, so that he durst not bring it with him, and that same letter was in that same bag, and he had forgotten to take out the letter, and he sent all together by London, so that it was the next day after that I was made bachelor ere then the letter came, and so the fault was not in me. And if ye will know what day I was made bachelor, I was made on Friday was se'nnight (*18th June*), and I made my feast on the Monday after (*21st June*). I was promised venison against my feast of my Lady Harcourt, and of another person too, but I was deceived of both; but my guests held them pleased with such meat as they had, blessed be God, who have you in his keeping." Dated Oxford, June 30, 1479.]

LETTER CCCCXVII.—(LVIII. vol. v. p. 251.)

[This letter, dated from Norwich, Saturday, August 21, 1479, has neither address nor signature, but is supposed to have been written by John Paston. Walter Paston died at Norwich, and was buried at St. Peter's, Hungate; Agnes Paston died about the same time, and was buried in Norwich Cathedral. The "uncle William" is always spoken of with ill feeling, and seems now to be suspected of having some sinister designs upon his mother's property, to a part of which, however, if even he had no previous right, he might naturally expect to succeed under her will or settlement: "Sure tidings are come to Norwich that my grandam is deceased, whom God assoil! my uncle had a messenger yesterday that she should not escape, and this day came another at such time as we were at mass for my brother Walter, whom God assoil! My uncle was coming to have offered, but the last messenger returned him hastily, so that he took his horse incontinent to inform more of our heaviness. My sister is delivered, and the child passed to God, who send us of his grace. [This sister was probably Anne, wife of W. Yelverton.] Docking told me secretly that for any haste (*in all haste*) my uncle should ride by my Lady of Norfolk to have a threescore persons, whether it is to convey my grandam hither or not he could not say; I deem it is rather to put them in possession of some of her lands."]

LETTER CCCCXVIII.—(LXXXVI. vol. ii. p. 277.)

This is the last letter from Sir John Paston, who died on the 15th of November following, but whether of the sickness which he seems in this letter so much to fear, I cannot discover. He here complains of sickness of body, and seems to have likewise much uneasiness of mind. The lands at Caister, Heyleadon, &c. were a constant trouble to him from the claims of the Dukes of Norfolk, Suffolk, &c. [His whole life, from his coming of age, seems to have been one game of law. Even in this his last letter he boasts of his skill in checking "uncle William" in the prosecution of his suits. The passion for holding land seems to have been very intense: the Pastons submit to almost any sacrifice rather than alienate land, and "uncle William" and others seem equally ardent for its acquisition.]

To the right worshipful Mistress Margaret Paston, be this delivered.

Please it you to weet that I have been here at London a fortnight, whereof the first four days I was in such fear of the sickness, and also found my chamber and stuff not so clean as I deemed, which troubled me sore; and as I told you at my departing I was not well moneyed, for I had not past ten marks (*6l. 13s. 4d.*), whereof I departed 40*s.* to be delivered of my old bedfellow; and then I rode beyond Dunstable, and there spake with one of my chief witnesses, which promised me to take labour and to get me writings touching this matter between me and the Duke of Suffolk,[1] and I rewarded him (*with*) 20*s.*, and then, as I informed you, I paid five marks (*3l. 6s. 8d.*) incontinent (*immediately*) upon my coming

[1] John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk.

here to repledge out my gown of velvet and other geer; and then I hoped to have borrowed some of Townshend, and he hath ffoodyd[1] not forth ever since, and in effect I could have at the most and at the soonest yesterday 20*s.*; wherefore I beseech you to purvey me an 100*s.*, and also to write to Peacock that he purvey me as much, 100*s.*, which I suppose that he hath gathered at Paston and other places by this time; for without I have this 10*l.*, as God help me, I fear I shall do but little good in no matter, nor yet I wote not how to come home but if (*unless*) I have it.

This geer hath troubled me so that it hath made me more than half sick, as God help me.

Item, I understand that my uncle William hath made labour of the escheator, and that he hath both a writ of essend. closeth extr. and also a supersedeas. I have written to the escheator therein of mine intent; if my uncle had his will in that, yet should he be never the nearer the land, but in effect he should have this advantage, which is behoveful for a weak matter, to have a colour, or a cloak, or a buttress; but on Tuesday I was with the Bishop of Ely,[2] who showeth himself good and worshipful, and he said that he should send to mine uncle William that he should not proceed in no such matter till that he speak with him, and moreover that he should cause him to be here hastily; in which matter is no remedy as now, but if (*unless*) it were so that the escheator, if he be entreated to sit by mine uncle William, which percase he shall not, that if my brother John and Lomnor have knowledge of the day, and they might be there, Lomnor can give evidence enough in that matter without the book; and moreover that they see both the letter and the other note that I sent to the escheator, and with help of the escheator all might be as best is; and if my brother and Lomnor take labour herein I shall recompense their costs.

Written in haste with short advisement on the Friday next St. Simon and Jude, in the nineteenth year of Edward IV.

Let my brother John see this bill, for he knoweth more of the matter.

JOHN PASTON, *knight*.

London,
Friday, 29th of October,
1479. 19 E. IV.

LETTER CCCCXIX.—(LIX. vol. v. p. 253.)

[THIS is merely a bill of the receipts and expenses of a manor-court at Cressingham, held before John Paston, on Nov. 25, 1479; and the amount for a few sums paid on account of the sickness and burial of his brother Walter.]

LETTER CCCCXX.—(LX. vol. v. p. 255.)

[JOHN PASTON here writes a detailed answer to his brother's letter (ccccxviii). He informs him that Lomnor and himself had drawn a bill, and sent it by their brother Edmund, who chanced to have another errand to that part of the country, namely, to get the goodwill of H. Spilman "towards the bargain like to be finished hastily betwixt Mistress Clippesby and him," afterwards still more detailed. John Paston goes on to relate that Edmund had found the escheator a more zealous friend than was desired. At the desire of the Bishop of Ely both parties were to refrain from litigation, and this was urged by Edmund on the escheator as a reason why Sir John Paston's inquisition should not be moved in unless Wm. Paston first moved for his; "but the escheator answered him that he would find it for you, after your bill, of his own authority; and so it was found." The opinions and advice conveyed in the following

[1] Qy. *footed, i. e.*, set foot out of his own house; or *fooded, i. e.*, eat out of his own house, for fear of the sickness mentioned at the beginning of this letter?

[2] John Morton, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury.

extracts are very creditable to John Paston's honesty, as well as talent; he appears to have been greatly improved by marriage, and to have shaken off something of his selfishness and greediness:—"But, sir, ye must remember that my Lord of Ely desired mine uncle as well as you to surcease, as I put mine uncle in knowledge, and mine uncle at the first agreed that he would make no more suit about it, in trust that ye would do the same, according to my Lord of Ely's desire; wherefore ye had need to beware that the escheator skips not from you, when he cometh to London, and certify it, ere ye speak with him. * * * * Sir, your tenants at Cromer say that they know not who shall be their lord; they marvel that ye nor no man for you hath not yet been there. Also when I was with mine uncle, I had a long pystyl (*letter*) of him, that ye had sent Peacock to Paston, and commanded the tenants there that they should pay none arrearages to him but if (*unless*) they were bound to him, by obligation, for the same; mine uncle saith it was otherwise appointed before the arbitrators; they thought, he saith, that as well my master Fitzwalter as other, that he should receive that as it might be gathered; but now he saith that he weeteth well some shall run away, and some shall waste it, so that it is never like to be gathered, but lost; and so I trow it is like to be of some of the debtors, what for casualty of death and these other causes before rehearsed; wherefore me thinketh, if it were appointed before the arbitrators that he should receive them, as he saith, it were not for you to break it, or else, if he be pleyn [full] executor to my grandam, then also he ought to have it. I speak like a blind man, do ye as ye think (*best*), for I was at no such appointment before the arbitrators, nor I know not whether he is executor to my grandam or not, but by his saying." This is a very curious passage: so much employed as John Paston had been, it is scarcely possible to imagine that he could be wholly ignorant of so important a provision of his grandmother's will. He then proceeds with another, and, as we know, a favourite subject—a marriage, and for his brother Edmund: this was to be done by procuring the wardship of a young widow's son, and he urges Sir John to use his influence "that mine uncle Sir George (Brown) may get to my brother Edmund of the king the wardship of John Clippesby, son and heir to John Clippesby, late of Oby, in the county of Norfolk, esquire, during the nonage of my Lord and Lady of York, though it cost four or five marks (2*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*, or 3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) the suit; let mine uncle Sir George be clerk of the hanaper, and keep the patent, if it be granted, till he have his money, and that shall not be long to. Mine uncle Sir George may inform the king for truth that the child shall have no land during his young mother's life, and there is no man [this means no father will marry his daughter to him] here that will marry with him without they have some land with him, and so the gift shall not be great that the king should give him, and yet I trow he should get the mother by that mean." This lady was the widow of William Clippesby (not John, says Fenn) of Oby; she shortly after became the wife of Edmund Paston, by whom she had one son, and died in 1491. The postscript of this letter shows the nature of John Paston's pecuniary and domestic troubles. "Sir, it is told me that Nicholas Barley, the squire, hath taken an action of debt against me this term; I pray you let Wheatley or somebody speak with him, and let him weet that, if he sue me softly this term, that he shall be paid ere the next term be at an end; it is about six pounds, and in *faith* he should have had it ere this time and (*if*) our threshers of Swainsthorp had not died; and if I might have paid it him a year ago, as well as I trust I shall soon after Christmas, I would not for twelve pounds have broken him so many promises as I have. Also, sir, I pray you send me, by the next man that cometh from London, two pots of treacle of Genoa; they shall cost 16*d.*, for I have spent out that I had with my young wife, and my young folks, and myself; and I shall pay him that shall bring them to me, and for his carriage; I pray you let it be sped. The people dieth sore in Norwich, and specially about my house, but my wife and my women come not out; and flee farther we cannot, for at Swainsthorp, since my departing thence, they have died, and been sick nigh in every house of the town." Much sickness and mortality are recorded as having happened in England in this year. The letter is dated from Norwich, Nov. 6, 1479.]

LETTER CCCCXXI.—(LXI. vol. v. p. 263.)

[William Lomnor writes to John Paston an account of the death of Sir John, his brother; and of what had been done to defend his interests against the old foe, "uncle William," who was endeavouring to get possession, and was, there is little doubt from the tenor of many preceding letters, a creditor to a very considerable amount:—"Your brother Edmund, on Sunday next before St. Andrew, rode to Marlingford, and before all the tenants examined one James, keeper there for William Paston, where he was the week next before Saint Andrew, and then he said that he was not at Marlingford from the Monday unto the Thursday at even, and so there was no man there but your brother's man at the time of his decease; so by that your brother died seized; and your brother Edmund bade your man keep possession to your behest, and warned the tenants to pay no man till you had spoken (*to*) them; so meseemeth that is a remitter to your old tailed title [*your original title under the entail*]: commune with your counsel. Further, at afternoon he was at Oxnead, to understand how they had done; and Perys kept your brother's possession at that time, and your uncle's man was not there, but he assigned another poor man to be there, whether that continued the possession of William Paston or not be remembered, &c. And after the decease, &c., W. Paston sent the man, that kept possession before, to enter and keep possession, which was no warrant by that appointment, for ye stand at your liberty as for any appointment or combination had before, and so men seem it were good for you to stand at large till ye hear more: if ye might have my Lord Chamberlain's good favour and lordship it were right expedient; as for my Lord of Ely, deal not with him by our advice, for he will move for treaty, and else be displeased. Your brother Edmund sent to John Wymondham, and he sent word he would be a mean of treaty, but would take no part, and as I suppose that was by Heydon's advice, for your uncle sent to me to be with him, and also the same man rode to Heydon and Wymondham, &c., the bringer of this letter can tell you, for he was with your brother Edmund at these places." Lomnor concludes by informing him that his brother Edmund "doth his diligence and part for you full well and sadly in many behalves, and hath brought my mistress your wife to Topcroft," which was her father's residence. This seems rather a singular arrangement at such a time. The letter is dated from Norwich, Saturday, Nov. 28, 1479.]

LETTER CCCCXXII.—(LXXXVII. vol. ii. p. 281.)

On the back of this letter is written in an ancient hand, "a Lr'e sent from Jo Paston ar.[*arm*] to his mother, touching the buryall of his Brother Sir John Paston in London." Sir John Paston died on the 15th of November, 1479, 19 Edward IV., aged between thirty and forty years: I should suppose nearly forty. This letter therefore was written in November, 1479.

To my right worshipful mother, Margaret Paston, at St. Peter's of Hungate [*Norwich*].

Right worshipful mother, after all duties of humble recommendation, as lowly as I can, I beseech you of your daily blessing and prayers; and, mother, John Clement, bearer hereof, can tell you, the more pity [*it*] is if it pleased God, that my brother is buried in the White Fryers at London,[1] which I thought should not have been; for I supposed that he would have been buried at Bromholm, and that caused me so soon to ride to London, to have purveyed his bringing home; and if it had been his will to have lain at Bromholm, I had purposed all the way as I have ridden to have

[1] [Fenn points this passage so as, we think, to destroy all meaning whatever: "John Clement, bearer hereof, can tell you the more pity is, if it pleased God that my brother," &c. The word *it* which we have inserted, though it makes the sense clearer, is not indispensable, as such elisions frequently occur in old writers.]

brought home my grandam[1] and him together, but that purpose is void as now; but this I think to do when I come to London, to speak with my Lord Chamberlain,[2] and to win by his means my Lord of Ely[3] if I can; and if I may, by any of *their* means, cause the king to take my service and my quarrel[4] together, I will; and I think that Sir George Brown,[5] Sir James Radcliff, and others of mine acquaintance, which wait most upon the king, and lie nightly in his chamber,[6] will put to their good wills: this is my way as yet.

And, mother, I beseech you, as ye may get or send any messengers, to send me your advice and my cousin Lomnor's, to John Lee's house, tailor, within Ludgate.

I have much more to write, but my empty head will not let me remember it.

Also, mother, I pray that my brother Edmund may ride to Marlingford, Oxnead, Paston, Cromer, and Caister, and all these manors to enter in my name; and to let the tenants of Oxnead and Marlingford know that I sent no word to him to take no money of them, but their attornment; wherefore he will not till he hear from me again ask them none, but let him command them to pay to[7] servants of mine uncle, nor to himself, nor to none other to his use, in pain of payment again to me. I think if there should be any money asked in my name, peradventure it would make my Lady of Norfolk against me, and cause her to think I deal more contrary to her pleasure than did my brother, whom God pardon of his great mercy!

I have sent to enter at Stansted and at Orwellbury; and I have written a bill to Anne Montgomery and Jane Rodon, to make my Lady of Norfolk if it will be.

Your son, and humble servant,

JOHN PASTON.

November, 1479.
19 E. IV.

LETTER CCCCXXIII.—(LXII. vol. v. p. 267.)

[JOHN PASTON writes from London to "his right worshipful and most kind mother, Margaret Paston," apparently in reply to her advice to him to leave London on account of some prevalent sickness. His resolute determination not to leave important business undone through fear of death is markedly characteristic both of the man and the times, when, for the attainment of almost any object of ambition or earnest desire, and sometimes even through mere love of excitement, life was risked, both actively and passively, with a readiness that was not indifference, and a courage that was seldom rashness, and it was felt as a "shame" to abandon an undertaking through fear of death. Paston continues to complain of his "unkind uncle." He says,—"Please it you to understand that, whereas ye willed me by pains to haste me out of the air that I am in, it is so that I must put me in God, for here must I be for a season; and in good faith I shall never, while God sendeth me life, dread more death than shame; and thanked be God, the sickness is well ceased here; and also my business putteth away my fear. I am driven to labour in letting of (*hindering*) the execution of mine unkind uncle's intent, wherein I have as yet none other discourage but that I trust in God he shall fail of it." He then proceeds to explain his hopes of assistance from the support of the Lord Chamberlain and the Bishop of Ely, the latter of whom he says hath put him in certainty by his words "that he will be with me against my uncle;" but acknowledges he hath not had much as yet from them. He then concludes thus:—"Mother, I beseech you that Peacock may be sent to purvey

[1] Agnes, daughter and coheir of Sir Edmund Berry, knight, and widow of Sir William Paston, knight, died in 1479.

[2] William Lord Hastings.

[3] John Morton, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, and Lord Chancellor.

[4] This must relate to his dispute with the Duchess of Norfolk, relative to Caister, or to some disputes with his uncle, William Paston, concerning other manors and estates. [It must mean all his quarrels, his cause generally. It would be impossible to guess the *one* among his numerous disputes.]

[5] Of Beechworth Castle, in Surrey.

[6] These seem to have been the "esquires of the king's body," who lay in his chamber.

[7] [This *to* should evidently be *no*, or *no* must be inserted after it.]

me as much money as is possible for him to make against my coming home, for I have much to pay here in London, what for the funeral costs, debts, and legacies, that must be content in greater haste than shall be mine ease. Also I would the farm barley in Fleg, as well as at Paston, if there be any, were gathered, and if it may be reasonably sold, then to be sold, or put to the malting; but I would at Caister that it were out of the tenant's hands, for things that I hear: keep ye counsel this from Peacock, and from all folks, which matter I shall appease, if God will give me leave." Dated Dec. 1479.]

LETTER CCCCXXIV.—(LXIII. vol. v. p. 273.)

[This letter, though not subscribed, is no doubt from John Paston to some person unknown. The first part of the letter relates to his brother's tombstone, or rather effigy, as it would seem by the objection that the "man at St. Bride's is no cleanly portrayer." The remainder of the letter is occupied with directions as to the transacting of some business at Rome respecting a bull, but the nature and cause of it is not stated. We give the passage respecting the effigy as a curious notice of the state of art in England at the time, having one artist to make the drawing, and another to carve it:—"Sir, I pray you that ye will send some child to my Lord of Buckingham's place, and to the Crown, which, as I conceive, is called Gerard's Hall, in Bread-street, to inquire whether I have any answer of my letter sent to Calais, which ye know of; and that ye will remember my brother's stone, so that it might be made ere I come again, and that it be cleanly wrought. It is told me that the man at Saint Bride's is no cleanly portrayer, therefore I would fain it might be portrayed by some other man, and he to grave it up." It has no date, but must have been written in 1479-80.]

LETTER CCCCXXV.—(LXIV. vol. v. p. 277.)

[This curious letter is from Edmund Paston to his mother, Margaret Paston, and was probably written soon after his marriage with the widow Clippesby, as he apologizes apparently for not having yet introduced her. His notion of setting off the value of a horse which died while at livery against the keep of the other horses, alleging it was put to grass and to work, reminds us of the horse causes of the present day. He writes as follows:—"Right worshipful and most especial good mother, in my most humble wise, with all my duty and service, I recommend me to you, beseeching you of your blessing, which is to me most joy of earthly thing; and it please you to be so good and kind mother to me to forgive me, and also my wife, of our lewd (*rude*) offence, that we have not done our duty, which was to have seen and have waited upon you ere now. My huswife trusteth to lay to you her huswifery for her excuse, which I must beseech you not to accept, for in good faith I deem her mind hath been otherwise occupied than to huswifery, which seemeth well by the lachesness (*negligence*) of the tilth of her lands. I beseech God for the furtherance of them as now, reward you, and the good parson of Mauteby, and also Master Baily, who I weened would not have balked this poor lodging to Norwich ward.[1] I understand by the bringer hereof that ye intend to ride to Walsingham; if it please you that I may weet the season, as my duty is, I shall be ready to await upon you.

[1] [This sentence is very obscure, but we think it is intended to read thus:—"I beseech God for the furtherance of them as [*from*] now," that is, the tilth of the lands from this time; "reward you, and the good parson of Mauteby, and also Master Baily," &c., *i. e., and to* reward you, that is, he beseeches God for all these objects.]

Please it you that the bringer hereof came to me for 10*s.* 8*d.* which I should owe his father; true it was at my last departing from him I owed him so much, but certainly ere I came at Thetford homewards I thought of conscience he ought to have restored me as much; I had my horses with him at livery, and, among all, one of them was put to grass and to labour, so that he died of a lax by the way; I paid for hard meat ever to him. Please it you to deliver Katharine 5*s.* which I send you in this bill. I am not ascertained how she is purveyed of money towards her journey. If her father could not have claimed one penny of me, I would not see her dispurveyed (*unprovided*) if I might, nor the poorest child that is belonging to his lodging. Mother, my wife is bold to send you a token. I beseech you pardon all things not done according to duty. I beseech God send you the accomplishment of your most worshipful desires. At Oby, the Saturday next before Candlemas. Jan. 29, 1479-80.]

LETTER CCCCXXVI.—(LXV. vol. v. p. 281.)

[This is one of the few letters of William Paston, the "uncle William," who is so often complained of by the other members of the family. This letter shows that he was at least as much sinned against as sinning, for he must have inherited Harwelbury[1] from his mother, who retained it till her death, and upon which his elder brother and his descendants could scarcely have had any just claim, although they appear to have endeavoured to obtain possession of it. Then, as now, the ties of relationship had but small influence when any right, or fancied right, to property was concerned. The letter to his tenant at Harwelbury, John King, is frank and well written, and, containing no imputations upon the motives of his relatives, though asserting the justice of his own claim, by no means gives us such an impression of his character as is conveyed by the frequent accusations and complaints of his kinsfolk. He says, "John Kyng, I greet you heartily well, and I understand, as well by my friend Sir William Storar, as by Richard Browne, that as well my kinsman Sir John Paston that dead is, as my kinsman John Paston that now liveth, have been with you, and given you many great threats for that ye, according to the truth, told unto them that ye occupied my manor of Harwelbury by my lease and by my right; and furthermore I understand, notwithstanding the said great threats, that ye, like a full, true, hearty friend, have dealed and fastly abiden in my title, and would not retourn (*attourn*) to none of them; wherefor I heartily thank you; and furthermore to courage (*encourage*) you in your fast dealing, I show unto you that I have right both in law and in conscience, whereby I promise you on my faith to defend you and save you harmless for the occupation of the land, or anything that ye shall do in my title against him, and (*if*) it should cost me as much as the manor is worth, and also another time to do as much for you and (*if*) it lie in my power, if ye have any matter to do there as I may do for you. And also I hear say by my said friend Sir William Storar, and by Richard Browne, that ye are of such substance, and of such trust, and such favour, in the country there, that it lieth in your power to do a good turn for your friend." The letter is dated from London, Thursday, Feb. 24, 1479-80.]

[1] Harwelbury, in other instances spelled Horwelbury and Orwellbury, is in the parish of Hatfield, near Royston, in Hertfordshire.

LETTER CCCCXXVII.—(LXVI. vol. v. p. 283.)

[This is another letter on wife-procuring, from Edmund Paston to his brother William. In Grose's Local Proverbs (given at the end of his Provincial Glossary) he gives the following under Norfolk:—"There never was a Paston poor, a Heydon a coward, or a Cornwallis a fool." In this correspondence the Pastons certainly appear not willing to belie the proverb, and particularly by marriage.

The one here proposed, however, did not take effect, and William died unmarried. The date of the letter is uncertain; it is here guessed at Jan. 13, 1480-1, but it might have been a few years later, which would reduce the seniority of the lady.

"I heartily recommend me to you; here is lately fallen a widow in Worsted, which was wife to one Bolt, a worsted-merchant, and worth a thousand pound, and gave to his wife an hundred marks (66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*) in money, stuff of household, and plate to the value of an hundred marks, and ten pounds by the year in land; she is called a fair gentlewoman. I will for your sake see her. She is right sister, of father and mother, to Harry Ingloss; I purpose to speak with him to get his good will. The gentlewoman is about thirty years, and has but two children, which shall be at the dead's charge; she was his wife but five years; if she be any better than I write for, take it in woothe [*take it in good part*]. I show the least; thus let me have knowledge of you as shortly as ye can, and when ye shall moun [*be able to*] be in this country." Written from Norwich.]

LETTER CCCCXXVIII.—(LXVII. vol. v. p. 285.)

[John Paston having desired the attendance at Norwich of a certain Thomas Cryne, the latter here writes to excuse himself, as he is about to attend the courts and leets of "Master Heydon," to whom he seems to have been bailiff. He writes: "My Lord Rivers in his own person hath been at Hickling, and his counsel learned, and searched his fees for his homages, among which ye be for Begvile's pasture in Somerton, and I suppose Winterton, late Sir John Fastolf's. My mistress, your mother, for Mautebys, in Waxham; wherein I beseech you provide, for I have done therein heretofore as far as I might, &c. What (*ever*) it meaneth, my lord is set sore to approvement and husbandry; his counsel hath told him he may set his fines for respite of homage at his pleasure, &c." This is a curious feature in the character of Earl Rivers; history shows him to us as a chivalrous knight, and a protector and patron of literature; here we have him as an encourager of agriculture, "set sore to approvement and husbandry" beyond the conception even of a country bailiff. The letter is dated from Thorpland, Wednesday, April 14, 1482.]

LETTER CCCCXXIX.—(LXVIII. vol. v. p. 289.)

[Margery Paston writes from Norwich to her husband John Paston about the state of his tenantry, in consequence of having their implements seized, under legal process, in part by "uncle William." The whole letter displays, not the lawlessness, but the rude methods of legal process, at the time, and the very imperfect state of agriculture:—"Right reverend and worshipful sir, in my most humble wise I recommend me unto you as lowly as I can, &c. Please you to weet, John Howes, Alexander Warden, John Tille, with the parson and the new miller of Marlingford, have gotten Thomas at Well's cart of East Todenham, farmer; and mine uncle William Paston, Harry Hervy of Melton Magna, farmer, and bailiff to my said uncle, Richard Barker's cart of the said town of Melton, late farmer, and yet is in danger (*debt*) to my said uncle; and William Smyth's cart of Brandon juxta Barnham Broom, late farmer and bailiff, and also in danger to my said uncle, on Monday and Tuesday last past carried away from Marlingford into the place at Saint Edmund's at Norwich twelve of your great planks, of the which they made six loads, bearing about the said carts bows and glaives (*bows and bills*) for fear of taking away. Sir, as for your tenants of Marlingford, they withhold their cattle and themselves both from the court, and come not within the lordship, nor make none attournment, except Thomas Davy and John Wake, which absenting of the tenants is to them a great hurt and loss for lack of seeding their lands with their winter corn; beseeching you for God's sake to remember some remedy for them." The letter then proceeds to state that some negotiation was being carried on by Lady Cal-

thorpe with William Paston, when he promised to abide by a proposal of his "touching the manor of Sporle," and to "write and seal as largely as any man will desire him." But Margery Paston adds, showing the feeling of suspicion entertained towards him,—"At his departing from my lady he was not merry; what the cause was I wot not. My Lady Calthorpe desireth me to write to you to have end, for he intends largely to have a peace with you, as he saith; but trust him not too much, for he is not good. My mother-in-law thinketh long she hear no word from you; she is in good health, blessed be God, and all your babies also. I marvel I hear no word from you, which grieveth me full evil; I sent you a letter by (*the*) brasier's son of Norwich, whereof I hear no word." Her postscript is in her usual affectionate style. "Sir, I pray you, if ye tarry long at London, that it will please (*you*) to send for me, for I think long since I lay in your arms." Dated Nov. 2, about 1482 or 1483.]

LETTER CCCCXXX.—(LXIX. vol. v. p. 293.)

[ANOTHER of the prudent and affectionate letters of Margery Paston to her husband, about the same disputes with his uncle William mentioned in the last. The Duchess of Norfolk seems to have hitherto favoured William, but to be now weary of so doing, and Margery hopes to win her to her husband's side if she be allowed to attempt it, but will not do so without his consent. From her frequent complaints of not receiving answers, her husband does not appear to have been a very punctual correspondent, at least with her, though, as we have seen, a good and ready letter-writer. "Mine own sweet heart; in my most humble wise I recommend me unto you, desiring heartily to hear of your welfare, the which I beseech Almighty God preserve and keep to his pleasure and your heart's desire. Sir, the cause of my writing to you at this time; on Friday at night last past came Alexander Wharton, John Howes, and John Fille, with two good carts well manned and horsed with them to Marlingford, and there at the manor of Marlingford, and at the mill, loaded both carts with mestlyon (*mesling*) and wheat, and betimes on Saturday in the morning they departed from Marlingford towards Bungay, as it is said; for the said carts came from Bungay, as I suppose, by the sending of Bryon, for he goeth hastily over the sea, as it is said, and as I suppose he will have the mestlyon over with him, for the most part of the cart-loads was mestlyon, &c. Sir, on Saturday last past I spake with my cousin Gurney, and he said, if I would go to my lady of Norfolk and beseech her good Grace to be your good and gracious lady, she would so be, for he said that one word of a woman should do more than the words of twenty men, if I could rule my tongue, and speak none harm of mine uncle; and if ye command me so for to do, I trust I shall say nothing to my lady's displeasure but to your profit; for me thinketh by the words of them, and of your good farmer of Oxnead, that they will soon draw to an end, for he curseth the time that ever he came in the farm of Oxnead, for he saith that he weeteth well that he shall have a great loss, and yet he will not be aknowyn (*let it be known*) whether he hath paid or not; but when he seeth his time he will say truth. I understand by my said cousin Gurney that my lady is near weary of her part; and he saith my lady shall come on pilgrimage into this town, but he knoweth not whether afore Christmas or after; and if I would then get my Lady Calthorpe, my mother-in-law, and my mother, and myself, and come before my lady beseeching her to be your good and gracious lady, he thinketh ye shall have an end, for fain she would be rid of it with her honour saved, but yet money she would have. No more to you at this time, but I marvel sore that I have no letter from you, but I pray God preserve you, and send me good tidings from you, and speed you well in your matters. And as for me, I have gotten me another lodging fellow, the first letter of her name is Mistress Bishop; she recommendeth her to you by the same token that ye would have had a token to my Master Bryon." Written from Norwich, Sunday, November, about 1482 or 1483.]

LETTER CCCCXXXI.—(LXXI. vol. v. p. 297.)

[This letter is from John Paston to his mother Margaret, who, he has heard from his wife, is about making her will. The letter is remarkably characteristic of the man; smooth, plausible, cunning, selfish, and jealous even of the influence of his wife. Of the manner in which the provisions of wills were fulfilled by the Pastons we have already had frequent specimens, and therefore, if he means that he must put from him all that she might bequeath orally, we may guess how well his word would have been kept. The will, however, was made, dated February 4, 1481-2, and proved December 18, 1484. After thanking his mother for her kindness to himself and his wife, he says—"It pleased you to have certain words to my wife at her departing, touching your remembrance of the shortness that ye think your days of, and also of the mind that ye have towards my brethren and sister your children, and also of your servants, wherein ye willed her to be a mean to me that I would tender and favour the same. Mother, saving your pleasure, there needeth not ambassadors nor means betwixt you and me, for there is neither wife nor other friend shall make me to do that (*that*) your commandment shall make me to do, if I may have knowledge of it; and if I have no knowledge, in good faith I am excusable both to God and you; and, well remembered, I wot well, ye ought not to have me in jealousy for one thing nor other that ye would have me to accomplish, if I overlive you; for I wot well not one man alive hath called so oft upon you as I to make your will and put each thing in certainty that ye would have done for yourself, and to your children and servants. Also at the making of your will, and at every communication that I have been at with you touching the same, I never contraried anything that ye would have done and performed, but always offered myself to be bound to the same; but, mother, I am right glad that my wife is anything (*in*) your favour or trust, but I am right sorry that my wife, or any other child or servant of yours, should be in better favour or trust with you than myself, for I will and must forbear and put from me that that all your other children, servants, priests, workmen, and friends of yours, that ye will ought bequeath to, shall take to them; and this have I and ever will be ready unto while I live, on my faith, and never thought other, so God be my help; whom I beseech to preserve you and send you so good life and long that ye may do for yourself and me after my decease; and I beshrew (*curse*) their hearts that would other, or shall cause you to mistrust or to be unkind to me or my friends." Written from Norwich, between 1482 and 1484.]

LETTER CCCCXXXII.—(II. of Appendix to vol. ii. p. 291.)

This letter shows the friendly disposition of the Lord Cromwell, and seems to hint his suspicions that some disagreeable circumstance might attend the strangeness alluded to if both parties did not obey his injunctions. Humphrey Bourchier, Lord Cromwell, was third son of Henry Earl of Essex; and marrying Joanna, co-heiress of Maud, sister of Ralph Lord Cromwell, had summons to parliament as Baron Cromwell in 1461, 1 E. IV. This letter therefore was written in this reign.

To my right trusty friend, John Paston, Esq.

Trusty and well-beloved friend, I greet you well; and forasmuch as it is done me to understand that there is a great strangeness betwixt my right trusty friend John Radcliff[1] and you, without any matter or cause of substance as I am learned, wherefore, inasmuch as I love you well both, I am not content it should so be.

Praying you heartily to forbear the said strangeness on your part to such time as I speak with you next myself, letting you weet I have written to him to do the same. And that ye fail not hereof, as I may do anything for you hereafter.

And our Lord have you in his keeping. Written at London the tenth day of February.

Cromwell.

London,
10th of February. E. IV.

[1] John Radcliff was afterwards Lord Fitzwalter.

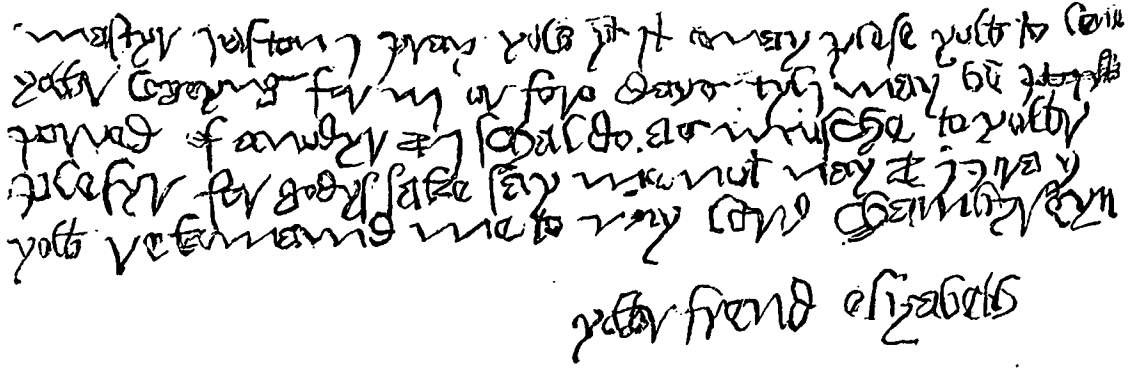
LETTER CCCCXXXIII.—(III. of Appendix to vol. ii. p. 293.)

The whole of this letter (of which, for its curiosity, I have had a fac-simile engraved) is written by Elizabeth, third daughter of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and Cecily, daughter of Ralph Nevile, Earl of Westmoreland. She was sister to Edward IV. and Richard III., by the latter of whom her son, John Earl of Lincoln (after the death of his own son), was declared heir to the crown. She married John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, and lies buried with him in Wingfield church in Suffolk. Under the direction is written (I believe) in the hand of Sir John Paston, ... "Littrà Ducisse Suff." If so, this letter was written in the reign of Edward IV., for Sir John died in 1479, 19 E. IV.; but if this memorandum be the handwriting of Sir John Paston's brother, then this letter might be written in the reign of Richard III., or even of Henry VII. The curiosity of this letter consists in the rank of the lady; and in being perhaps the only one extant of her writing. It shows likewise the simplicity of the times, when a princess of the blood royal, coming to London unprovided of a lodging, petitions for the use of that of a friend for a few days, in the humblest terms: "for Godys sake, say me not nay." As to exterior form, this is rather a note than a letter, being only folded, without turning in the edges of the paper. A silken twine had been passed through every fold of it, the ends of which were afterwards united, and secured under the seal. The direction seems not to be in the hand of the Lady Elizabeth, but of some secretary in attendance on her. Perhaps she did not choose to trust him with the singularity of her request, but employed him only to superscribe it.

Unto John Paston, in haste.

MASTER PASTON, I pray you that it may please you to leave[1] your lodging for three or four days, till I may be *purveyed*[2] of another, and I shall do as much to your pleasure; for God's sake, say me not nay, and I pray you recommend me to my Lord Chamberlain.[3]

E. IV. Your friend, ELIZABETH.



[1] Leue, or lend: I believe it is leve, but it is so written that it is very difficult to determine.

[2] Porved, purveyed.

[3] William Lord Hastings was Lord Chamberlain to Edward IV.

LETTER CCCCXXXIV.—(IV. of Appendix to vol. ii. p. 295.)

This letter from John Paston to Mrs. Annes, or Anne, is either to a Mrs. Anne Hawte, or to some lady abroad at Calais, from which place he was at this time returning. His saying, "I am prowd that ye can reed Inglyshe," seems to imply that some other language was her native one; and therefore she was most probably some foreign lady. [The date of the year is not ascertainable, and the letter is therefore placed here, though it certainly comes much earlier in chronological arrangement.]

To Mistress Anne.

SINCE it is so that I may not as oft as I would be there, as I might do my message myself, mine own fair Mistress Anne, I pray you to accept this bill for my messenger, to recommend me to you in my most faithful wise, as he that fainest of all other desireth to know of your welfare, which I pray God increase to your most pleasure.

And, mistress, though so be that I as yet have given you but easy (*little*) cause to remember me for lack of acquitation,[1] yet I beseech you let me not be forgotten, when ye reckon up all your servants, to be set in the number with other.

And I pray you, Mistress Anne, for that service that I owe you, that in as short time as ye goodly may that I might be ascertained of your intent, and of your best friends, in such matters as I have broken to you of; which both your and mine right trusty friends John Lee, or else my mistress his wife, promised before you and me at our first and last being together, that as soon as they or either of them knew your intent, and your friends, that they should send me word, and if they so do I trust soon after to see you.

And now farewell, mine own fair lady, and God give you good rest, for in faith I trow ye be in bed.

Written in my way homeward, on Mary Magdalen's day at midnight.

Your own, JOHN PASTON.

Mistress Anne, I am proud that ye can read English, wherefore I pray you acquaint you with this my lewd (*uncouth*) hand, for my purpose is that ye shall be more acquainted with it, or else it shall be against my will; but yet and when ye have read this bill, I pray you burn it, or keep it secret to yourself, as my faithful trust is in you.

22nd of July,
St. Mary Magdalen.

LETTER CCCCXXXV.—(VI. Appendix to vol. ii. p. 301.)

We are here furnished with a curious though imperfect catalogue of the library of a gentleman in the reign of Edward IV. It is written on a strip of paper about seventeen inches long, and has been rolled up, by which means one end, having been damp, is entirely decayed, so that the names of some of the books are imperfect; and the then price or value of all of them is not now to be discovered, that having been uniformly written at the end which is now destroyed. It contained an account of all the books he had, as it mentions those which were lent out at the time the catalogue was made; and though the name of the owner is gone, yet, by comparing the list with the account of William Ebesham, in Letter CCLXIV. v. ii. p. 15, it fixes it to the library of John Paston. It contained only one book in print, the rest being manuscripts, and appear to have been bound together as numbered 1. 2. 3, &c., in the inventory. An account of most of the books mentioned is to be found in Mr. Warton's 'History of English Poetry,' and some of them, when afterwards printed, in Mr. Herbert's improved edition of Ames's 'History of Printing.' To these, therefore, I refer the reader. [Much of the original is torn or obliterated, and the titles of the works in each volume are run on together; but the deficiencies have been supplied by Fenn in all those cases where sufficient of the titles have been left to identify the works.]

The Inventory of English books, of John (Paston), made the 5th day of November, in the . . . year of the reign of Edward IV.

1 A BOOK had of my hostess at the George,
..... of the Death of Arthur, beginning at Cassibelan
Guy Earl of Warwick
King Richard Cœur de Lyon
A Chronicle to Edward the III. Price

[1] In the original *aqweytacon*, which Fenn translates *acquaintance*, but this gives a very obscure meaning. We believe we have given the right word, meaning that he has not acquitted himself regularly as a correspondent.]

2 Item, a Book of Troilus, which William Br..... hath had near ten years, and lent it to Dame ..... Wyngfeld, and there I saw it ..... worth

3 Item, a black Book, with the Legend of Lad[1] ..... sans Mercy.
The Parliament of Birds.
The Temple of Glass
Palatyse and Scitacus
The Meditations of .....
The Green Knight ..... worth

4 Item, a Book in print of the Play of the ..

5 Item, a Book lent Midelton, and therein is
Belle Dame sans Mercy.
The Parliament of Birds
Ballad of Guy and Colbrond,
..... of the Goose, the .....
The Disputation between Hope and Despair.
..... Merchants.
The Life of Saint Chrystopher.

6 A red Book that Percival Robsart gave me; of the Meeds of the Mass.
The Lamentation of Child Ipotis.
A Prayer to the Vernicle,
called the Abbey of the Holy Ghost.

7 Item, in quires, Tully de Senectute in whereof there is no more clear writing.

8 Item, in quires, Tully or Cypio[2] (*Scipio*) de Amicitia,[3] left with William Worcester ..... worth

9 Item, in quires, a Book of the Policy of In.....

10 Item, in quires, a Book de Sapientiâ; wherein the second person is likened to Sapience.

11 Item, a Book de Othea[4] (*Wisdom*), text and gloss, worth in quires

Memorandum; mine old Book of Blazonings of Arms.

Item, the new Book portrayed and blazoned.

Item, a Copy of Blazonings of Arms, and the names to be found by Letter (*alphabetically*).

Item, a Book with Arms portrayed in paper.

Memorandum; my Book of Knighthood; and the manner of making of Knights; of Justs, of Tournaments; fighting in Lists; paces holden by Soldiers; and Challenges; Statutes of War; and de Regimine Principum ..... worth

Item, a Book of new Statutes from Edward the IV.

5th of November. E. IV.

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[1] May not the chasm be thus supplied? *The Legende off Ladys, and la bele Dame*, as la bele Dame sauns m'eye is never called by the name of Legend in any edition of Chaucer that I have seen.

[2] Query, if Cypio is not a mistake for "Somnium Scipionis," a piece which is usually printed with the 'De Amicitiâ,' and probably accompanied it in this manuscript?

[3] It is a curious circumstance that this book should be here mentioned as left with William Worcester, who, with the assistance of John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, and John Phrea, or Free, a monk of Bristol, translated it.

[4] This book, 'De Othea,' is a poetical epistle, if I remember right, from Hector to Othea, probably Minerva or Wisdom, who is addressed in the 'Iliad' frequently by the title of Ω Θεα. This circumstance is laid hold of by some French antiquary (for the original of this book is in French) to prove that Greek was understood in France earlier than is usually imagined.

LETTER CCCCXXXVI.—(VII. of Appendix to vol. ii. p. 305.)

These verses are inserted as a specimen of the poetry of a lady, sent as a letter to a nobleman who was absent from her, and for whom she appears to have had a sincere affection. The thoughts contained in them are, many of them, natural and tender, and some of them pretty and affecting. They are certainly originals, as in several places the words first written are struck out, and words more to the writer's satisfaction inserted above them: thus the sixth line in the fifth stanza was originally written—

"Er *then may I* but *thys* ye shall not mysse."

And then thus altered:—

"Er I myselyf but yett ye shall not mysse."

Several others have similar alterations. They were written either in the reign of Henry VI. or Edward IV., the writing and paper being both of that age, and the paper-mark is used upon two other letters in this collection, of the former reign.

Verses written by a Lady, in the reign of Henry VI. or Edward IV., to an absent Lord with whom she was in love.

My right good lord, most knightly gentle knight,
Unto your grace in my most humble wise
I me commend, as it is due and right,
Beseeching you at leisure to advise [1]
Upon this bill, and pardon mine emprize,
Grounded on folly, for lack of providence,
Unto your Lordship to write without licence.

But when a man is with a fever shake,
Now hot, now cold, as falleth by adventure,
He in his mind conjecture will, and take
The nighest mean to work his cure,
More patiently his painés to endure;
And right so I, so it you not displease,
Write in this wise my painés to appease.

For when I count and make a reckoning
Betwixt my life, my death, and my desire,
My life, alas! it serveth of nothing,
Since with your parting departed my pleasure;[2]
Wishing your presence setteth me on fire,
But then your absence doth my heart so cold,
That for the pain I not [3] me where to hold.

O out on absence, there fools have no grace,
I mean myself, nor yet no wit to gwye [4]
Them out of pain, to come unto that place;
Where as presence may shape a remedy
For all disease, now fie on my folly,
For I despaired am of your soon meeting,
That God, I pray, me to your presence bring.

Farewell, my lord, for I may write no more,
So troubled is my heart with heaviness;
Envy also, it grieveth me most sore,
That this rude bill shall put himself in press,[5]
To see your lordship of his presumptuousness
Ere I myself; but yet ye shall not miss
To have my heart tofore [6] my bill I wis.

Which I commit, and all my whole service,
Into your hands, demean it as you list,
Of it, I keep [7] to have no more franchise
Than I heartless surely me wist,
Saving only that it be as trist [8]
And to you true as ever was heart, and plain,
Till cruel death depart [9] it upon twain.

Adieu, disport; farewell, good company;
In all this world there is no joy I ween,
For there as whilom I see with mine eye
A lusty [10] lord leaping upon a green;
The soil is sole, no knights there be seen,
No ladies walk there they were wont to done;
Alas! some folk departed hence too soon.

Some time also men might a wager make,
And with their bows [11] afield have it tried,
Or at the paume [12] their pleasure for to take,
Then were they loose that now stand as tied.
I not [13] whereto this world may be applied;
For all good cheer, on even and on morrow,
Which then was made, now turneth me to sorrow.

---

[1] Consider, reflect.

[2] As spelt in the original, plesyer, it rhymes exactly with desyer and lyer.

[3] [*Not* is used here for *know not*. It is used in the same way in the last stanza.]

[4] Guide.

[5] Readiness. [Rather in the *crowd* or *press*.]

[6] [In the original—

"To have my hert to for my byll I wys."

Meaning, we think, "to have my heart too before my bill."]

[7] I care.

[8] Query, whether this means *sorrowful* or *trusty*?

[9] [*Depart* for *divide*. It is frequently used in the same sense by Shakspere.]

[10] Lively, and active in his exercises.

[11] [In original, *bowys*, which completes the rhythm.]

[12] Some place of resort for the game of tennis.

[13] [*I know not*. See preceding column.]

EDWARD V.
From a MS. in the Archbishop's Library at Lambeth.

EDWARD V.—1483.

[The only letter given by Sir John Fenn under this reign is not from the Paston Collection, but was furnished by Mr. Brand, who found it in a MS. collection of pedigrees belonging to Sir Walter Blackett of Newcastle, under the title of 'A Coppie of some letters which were found in Rabie Castle [in Durham] after the Rebellion, to show the fashion ..... of those times.' The date of the MS. is of James I. The letter is addressed by Richard Duke of Gloucester to a Lord Nevile, whose identity is not ascertained; there was a Nevile Lord Abergavenny, but no Lord Nevile, at the period. The letter is of no importance, merely inviting the said Lord Nevile to come in haste, "defensibly arranged," and is dated 11th June, 1483. It has therefore been omitted.]

RICHARD III.
From a Painting on Glass belonging to Trinity College, Cambridge.

RICHARD III.—1483 TO 1485.

LETTER CCCCXXXVII.—(I. vol. ii. p. 315.)

This letter refers to the commotions excited in different parts of the kingdom by the Duke of Buckingham, who from discontent conspired against Richard. He failed in his enterprise, however, and, being deserted by his forces, fled, was treacherously betrayed, taken, and beheaded. John Lord Howard (descended from Margaret, daughter and coheir of Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk) was created Duke of Norfolk in 1483, 1 R. III., and was slain at the battle of Bosworth in 1485.

To my right well-beloved friend, John Paston, be this delivered in haste.

RIGHT well-beloved friend, I commend me to you. It is so that the Kentishmen be up in the Weld,[1] and say that they will come and rob the city, which I shall let if I may.

Therefore I pray you that with all diligence ye make you ready and come hither, and bring with you six tall fellows in harness; and ye shall not lyse (*lose*) your labour, that knoweth God, who have you in his keeping.

Written at London, the tenth day of October.

Your friend,

J. NORFOLK.

London,
Friday, 10th of October,
1483. 1 R. III.

LETTER CCCCXXXVIII.—(II. vol. ii. p. 317.)

We have here an order of the Duke of Suffolk upon a tenant, for the payment of a sum of money which the Duke had promised on his honour should be paid. This is a common occurrence, and certainly not worth recording, if it had not been for the threat at the end of it, under his own hand, which shows the despotism of the Duke, and that the farm was let at will, and not on lease.

The Duke of Suffolk to Thomas Jeffreys, our farmer of Maundevills, greeting.

WE will and straitly charge you that ye content and pay unto the bringer hereof, for money employed in our household, three pounds thirteen shillings and four pence, for such stuff as we our own person have promised, and not to be failed, upon our worship.

Of the which sum of 73*s.* and 4*d.* so by you contented and paid, we will and also straitly charge our auditors for the time being, by virtue of this our writing, signed with our hand, to make you due and plein (*full*) allowance at your next account.

At Wingfield, the first day of May, in the first year of King Richard III.

SUFFOLK, and fail not on pain (*of*) losing of your farm.

Wingfield,
Saturday, 1st of May,
1484. 1 R. III.

[1] [The Weald of Kent.]

NUMBER CCCCXXXIX.—(III. vol. ii. p. 319.)

This address of King Richard to his people is drawn up in the most artful manner, in order to inflame the minds not only of the multitude, but of the peers, bishops, dignitaries, and great men, and to induce them to resist the attempts of the Earl of Richmond upon the crown with all their power.

On the back of the paper in an ancient hand is written,

Kent Sheriffs.

The copy of a Letter of King Richard III., persuading his subjects to resist Henry Tydder (Tudor), *afterwards King of England, and declaring from whom the said Henry was descended.*

RICHARD R.

Richard, &c., wisheth health: we command you, &c.

Forasmuch as the king our sovereign lord hath certain knowledge that Piers Bishop of Exeter,[1] Jasper Tydder[2] (*Tudor*) son of Owen Tydder, calling himself Earl of Pembroke, John late Earl of Oxford,[3] and Sir Edward Wodevile,[4] with other diverse his rebels and traitors, disabled and attainted by the authority of the High Court of Parliament, of whom many be known for open murderers, advowterers (*adulterers*), and extortioners, contrary to the pleasure of God, and against all truth, honour, and nature, have forsaken their natural country, taking them first to be under the obeisance of the Duke of Bretagne,[5] and to him promised certain things, which by him and his council were thought things too greatly unnatural and abominable for them to grant, observe, keep, and perform, and therefore the same utterly refused.

The said traitors, seeing the said duke and his council would not aid nor succour them nor follow their ways, privily departed out of his country into France, and there taking them to be under the obeisance of the king's ancient enemy, Charles,[6] calling himself King of France, and to abuse and blind the commons of this said realm, the said rebels and traitors have chosen to be their captain one Henry Tydder[7] (*Tudor*), son of Edmund Tydder, son of Owen Tydder, which of his ambitious and insatiable covetise encroacheth and usurpeth upon him the name and title and royal estate of this realm of England; whereunto he hath no manner interest, right, title, or colour, as every man well knoweth; for he is descended of bastard blood, both of father's side and of mother's side; for the said Owen the grandfather was bastard born, and his mother was daughter unto John Duke of Somerset, son unto John Earl of Somerset, son unto Dame Katherine Swynford, and of their indouble avoutry[8] gotten; whereby it evidently appeareth that no title can nor may in him, which fully intendeth to enter this realm, proposing a conquest; and if he should achieve his false intent and purpose, every man's life, livelihood, and goods, shall be in his hands, liberty, and disposition; whereby should ensue the disheriting and destruction of all the noble and worshipful blood of this realm for ever, and to the resistance and withstanding whereof every true and natural Englishman born must lay to his hands for his own surety and weal.

And to the intent that the said Henry Tydder might the rather achieve his false intent and purpose by the aid, support, and assistance of the king's ancient enemy of France, (*he*) hath covenanted and bargained with him and all the council of France, to give up and release in perpetuity all the right, title, and

[1] Peter Courtney, Bishop of Exeter, after the miscarriage of the Duke of Buckingham's conspiracy, fled into Bretagne to the Earl of Richmond, who, after he became Henry VII., promoted this prelate to the see of Winchester in 1486, in which he died in 1492.

[2] Jasper Tudor de Hatfield, half-brother to Henry VI., created Duke of Bedford in 1485.

[3] John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, who had escaped from the castle of Hammes.

[4] Sir Edward Wodevile, brother to the queen of Edward IV.

[5] Francis II., the last Duke of Bretagne, was overthrown by Charles VIII. King of France, and died in 1488.

[6] Charles VIII. ascended the throne in 1483, and died in 1498.

[7] Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, who, in 1483, became King of England, &c., by the title of Henry VII. He died in 1509.

[8] This either means double adultery, that is adultery on both sides; or indubitable, undoubted adultery.

claim that the Kings of England have had and ought to have to the crown and realm of France, together with the duchies of Normandy, Anjou and Maine, Gascony and Guisnes Cassell,[1] and the towns of Calais, Guisnes, Hammes, with the Marches appertaining to the same, and dissever and exclude the arms of France out of the arms of England for ever.

And in more proof and showing of his said purpose of conquest, the said Henry Tydder hath goven (*given*), as well to divers of the said king's enemies as to his said rebels and traitors, archbishoprics, bishoprics, and other dignities spiritual; and also the duchies, earldoms, baronies, and other possessions and inheritances of knights, esquires, gentlemen, and other the king's true subjects within the realm; and intendeth also to change and subvert the laws of the same, and to induce and establish new laws and ordinances amongst the king's said subjects.

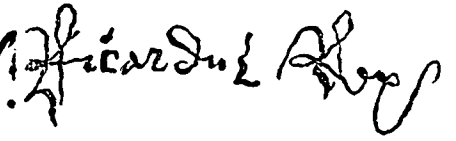
And over this, and besides the alienations of all the premises into the possession of the king's said ancient enemies, to the greatest anytishment[2] (*annihilation*), shame, and rebuke that ever might fall to this said land, the said Henry Tydder and others, the king's rebels and traitors aforesaid, have extended (*intended*)[3] at their coming, if they may be of power, to do the most cruel murders, slaughters, and robberies, and disherisons that ever were seen in any Christian realm.

For the which and other inestimable dangers to be eschewed, and to the intent that the king's said rebels, traitors, and enemies may be utterly put from their said malicious and false purpose and soon discomforted, if they enforce[4] (*endeavour*) to land, the king our sovereign lord willeth, chargeth, and commandeth all and every of the natural and true subjects of this his realm to call the premises to their minds, and like good and true Englishmen to endower (*furnish*) themselves with all their powers for the defence of them, their wives, children, and goods, and heretofore ditaments, against the said malicious purposes and conspirations, which the said ancient enemies have made with the king's said rebels and traitors for the final destruction of this land, as is aforesaid.

And our said sovereign lord, as a well-willed, diligent, and courageous prince, will put his most royal person to all labour and pain necessary in this behalf for the resistance and subduing of his said enemies, rebels, and traitors, to the most comfort, weel, and surety of all his true and faithful liege men and subjects. * *

And over this, our said sovereign lord willeth and commandeth all his said subjects to be ready in their most defensible array to do his highness service of war, when they by open proclamation or otherwise shall be commanded so to do, for resistance of the king's said rebels, traitors, and enemies. And this under peril, &c.

Witness myself at Westminster, the twenty-third day of June,[5] in the second year of our reign.



Westminster,
Wednesday, 23rd of June,
1483. 2 R. III.

[1] [Query, if this does not mean the castle of Guisnes? The original has Guyne Cascell.]

[2] Aneantisement—anientised is used by Chaucer, in his tale of Melebeus, for reducing to nothing.

[3] [*Extended* may perhaps mean here *given out—made known.*]

[4] Or rather, make good their landing by force.

[5] Some of our historians say, that King Richard was proclaimed on the 20th, and others, on the 22nd of June, 1483; the 23rd of June, in the second year of his reign, must therefore be in 1484.—[The 26th of June is the date now generally received as the actual time of his accession; see 'Pictorial History of England,' vol. ii. p. 122. Dr. Shaw's famous sermon was preached on Sunday, June 22, 1483, at Paul's Cross; on the following Tuesday the assembly at the Guildhall of London took place, at which Richard presented himself and was hailed by a few as king; and on the 26th he took upon himself the office of king in Westminster Hall. He, however, afterwards himself dated from the 22nd June, and his accession is so given in Sir N. H. Nicolas's 'Chronology of History.' The date of the letter in any point of view must, however, be an error, and it may have been that of the copyist; but it is most probable it is the date of the year, which should be 1484.]

[The Autograph is taken from an original in the possession of Thomas Astle, Esq.

LETTER CCCCXL.—(IV. vol. ii. p. 327.)

John Paston, Esq., was Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk on the accession of Henry VII.; he most probably therefore entered upon that office at Michaelmas, 1484, 2 R. III., this letter being dated on the 20th of October.

To our trusty and well-beloved John Paston, Sheriff of Suffolk and Norfolk.

The Duke of Suffolk.

RIGHT well-beloved, we greet you well; and forasmuch as the king our sovereign lord hath late addressed his letters of commission under his seal unto us, reciting by the same that his highness understanding certain of his rebels associate to his old enemies of Scotland, intending not only to trouble his peace, the nobles and subjects of this realm to destroy, their goods and possessions to spoil, and reward at their liberties, but also the laws of this land and holy church to subvert.

Our said most dread sovereign lord, as a Christian prince .....[1] his said enemies and rebels to resist, hath assigned and commanded us to do all manner ..... and others defensible able to labour, as well archers as hobbellers,[2] to come before us and charge them ..... armed and arrayed every man after his degree and power, to attend upon his person and upon us, to do him service, in defence as well of the church as of the said nobles and subjects of this realm, against his said enemies and rebels. We therefore will and in our said sovereign lord's name straightly charge and command you, that in all possible haste ye do (*cause*) this to be proclaimed: and that all manner men able to do the king service, as well knights, esquires, and gentlemen, as townships and hundreds, as well within franchises and liberties as without, within the counties of Suffolk and Norfolk; and that they be charged to be ready at all times, upon an hour's warning, and ordered, according to the last commission afore this, to attend upon his grace and upon us to do him service, whatsoever they shall be commanded; not failing hereof, as ye will answer at your peril.

Given at Long Stratton,[3] the 20th day of October.

And furthermore that ye give credence unto our servant this bringer, as this same day we received the king's commission at four in the afternoon.

SUFFOLK, your friend.

Long Stratton,
Wednesday, 20th of October,
1484. 2 R. III.

LETTER CCCCXLI.—(V. vol. ii. p. 331.)

We are here acquainted with the diversions and amusements allowed in the houses of the nobility and gentry during the joyous season of Christmas. We see likewise the respect paid to the memory of the head of a family, when, at the Christmas following his death, none of the more merry or noisy disports were permitted.

To my right worshipful husband, John Paston.

RIGHT worshipful husband, I recommend me unto you: please it you to weet that I sent your eldest son to my Lady Morley,[4] to have knowledge what sports were used in her house in Christmas next following after the decease of my lord her husband; and she said that there were none disguisings, nor harping, nor luting, nor singing, nor none loud disports; but playing at the tables, and chess, and cards; such disports she gave her folks leave to play and none other.

Your son did his errand right well, as ye

[1] The letter is defective in those places where dots are used.

[2] Hoblers, or hobilers, so called from the hobbies, or diminutive horses on which they rode; or more probably from *hobilles*, the short jackets they wore. They were light horsemen, and proved of considerable service to Edward III. in his French expeditions. By the tenure of their lands they were obliged to maintain their nags, and were expected to be in readiness, when sudden invasions happened, to spread immediate intelligence of the same throughout the country.

[3] In Norfolk.

[4] Widow of William Lovel, Lord Morley, who died the 23rd of July, 1475.

shall hear after this. I sent your younger son to the Lady Stapleton,[1] and she said according to my Lady Morley's saying in that; and as she had seen used in places of worship thereas (*where*) she hath been.

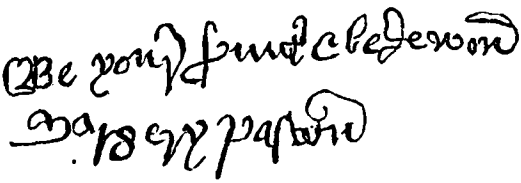
I pray you that ye will assure to you some man at Caister to keep your buttery, for the man that ye left with me will not take upon him to breve[2] daily as ye commanded; he saith he hath not used to give a reckoning neither of bread nor ale till at the week's end, and he saith he wot (*knows*) well that he should not condeneth (*give content*), and therefore I suppose he shall not abide, and I trow ye shall be fain to purvey another man for Symond, for ye are never the nearer a wise man for him.

I am sorry that ye shall not at home be for Christmas.

I pray you that ye will come as soon as ye may; I shall think myself half a widow, because ye shall not be at home, &c. God have you in his keeping. Written on Christmas even.

By your servant and beadwoman,
MARGERY PASTON.

Friday, 24th of December;
1484. 2 R. III.



LETTER CCCCXLII.—(I. vol. v. p. 305.)

[THIS letter is from Dame Elizabeth Browne (formerly Poyninge), the daughter of Sir William Paston the judge, to her nephew John Paston. Fenn supposes it to have been written "to disprove some assertion of William Paston concerning the matters in dispute between him and his nephew." As W. Paston is in no way alluded to throughout the letter, we do not see the value of this guess, but Fenn admires so indiscriminatiugly the chief contributors to his Collection, that he enters, on too many occasions, into the petty feelings of dislike which they appear to have entertained for William Paston. Except compliments, the following is the letter:—"Whereas ye desire me to send you word whether my brother John Paston, your father, was with my father and his, whom God assoil, during his last sickness and at the time of his decease at St. Bride's or not. Nephew, I ascertain you upon my faith and poor honour, that I was fourteen, fifteen year, or sixteen year old, and at St. Bride's with my father and my mother, when my father's last sickness took him, and till he was deceased; and I dare depose before any person honourable that, when my father's last sickness took him, my brother your father was in Norfolk, and he came not to London till after that my father was deceased; and that can Sir William Cooting and James Gresham record, for they both were my fa-

[1] Sir Miles Stapleton died in 1466.

[2] To breve is to make up an account. How strictly this custom of *breving* was formerly observed in great houses may be known from one of the *daily* rules enforced in the family of the fifth Earl of Northumberland. "Furst, that the said clerkis be dayly at the *brevynge* every day by vii of the cloke in the mornynge. And theire to *breve* every officer accordynge as the custome is unto half howre after viii of the cloke. And that theire be no brackfasts delyveret unto the tyme that all the officers have *breved*." —See *Household-Book*, p. 59. As this letter has no date of the year, I have some doubts where to place it, unless we may suppose that the same respect would be paid to the memory of Margaret, mother of J. Paston, who was an heiress, and died in 1484, and whose will was proved on the 18th of December in that year. If I could have placed it earlier, I should have fixed upon the death of Sir John Paston, in November 1479, as the time of its being written; but the present J. Paston was not married till 1477, and his eldest son being born in 1478, was now only in his seventh year, which might be the case, as the expression that he "dede hese heyrne ryght wele" implies his being very young.

ther's clerks at that time." There are two dates to the letter, "the Thursday next before Whitsunday, the second year of King Richard the Third" (May 19, 1485), which is scratched through with a pen; and then "the 23rd of September, the first year of the reign of King Henry the Seventh." It was probably written on the first date, but not transmitted till the second, a proof that its contents were not considered very urgent.]

LETTER CCCCXLIII.—(VI. vol. ii. p. 335.)

Henry, Earl of Richmond, landed upon Saturday the 6th of August, 1485, at Milford Haven in South Wales; this letter therefore could not be written before the Friday or Saturday following (12th or 13th of August). Richard appears not to have regarded the landing of the Earl as a matter of that great importance which it soon became; for, as a valiant prince, he certainly would have set forwards to meet his competitor as soon as possible; and however great his veneration might have been for the day of "the Assumption of our Lady," yet his fears of losing a crown, for the possession of which he had ventured everything, would have been still greater, and would have prompted him to break in upon the services due to our Lady. The Duke of Norfolk survived the writing of this letter only a few days, for he joined his royal master, and commanded the vanguard of his army in the field of Bosworth, where he fell on Monday the 22nd of August, valiantly fighting for his sovereign lord and benefactor.

To my well-beloved friend John Paston, be this bill delivered in haste.

WELL-BELOVED friend, I commend me to you; letting you to understand that the king's enemies be a-land, and that the king would have set forth as upon Monday, but only for our Lady-day;[1] but for certain he goeth forward as upon Tuesday, for a servant of mine brought to me the certainty.

Wherefore I pray you that ye meet with me at Bury,[2] for, by the grace of God, I purpose to lie at Bury as upon Tuesday night; and that ye bring with you such company of tall men as ye may goodly make at my cost and charge, besides that which ye have promised the king; and, I pray you, ordain them jackets[3] of my livery, and I shall content you at your meeting with me.

Your lover,

J. NORFOLK.

Between the 8th and 15th of August, 1485. 3 R. III.

[1] The Assumption of our Lady, 15th of August.

[2] Bury St. Edmund's, in Suffolk.

[3] From this it appears that the royal army, when embodied, was clothed in jackets of the livery of the respective great lords and commanders.

[We have now brought down our correspondence to the close of the reign of Richard III. To effect this in an unbroken chronological series, we have introduced abstracts of several letters from the fifth quarto volume, of which the copyright is yet unexpired, and upon the rights of which we should be sorry to trespass. There are only two letters in the fourth quarto volume belonging to the reign of Henry VII.; but the fifth quarto contains many of that reign of a most interesting character. To all to whom expense is not an object, we can recommend the volume as a desirable one to possess.

Taking it for granted that the reader, who has been admitted so freely into the family affairs and secrets of the Pastons, will feel some interest in their further fortunes, we have added the pedigree of the family to its final extinction.]

PEDIGREE OF THE FAMILY OF PASTON, OF NORFOLK.

Clement Paston, of Paston, died 1419. Buried at Paston. = **Beatrice, daughter of John de Somerton, died before 1419. Buried at Paston.**

Sir William Paston, Kt., born 1378. Brought up to the law, and became a judge of the Common Pleas. His will is dated 20th June, 1443, and he died 13th August, 1444, aged 66. He was called the Good Judge. = **Agnes, daughter and coheir of Sir Edmund Berry,** of Harlingbury Hall, in Therfield, Herts, by Alice, daughter and heir of Sir Thomas Gerbridge. Died 1479. Both she and Sir William are buried at Norwich Cathedral, in Our Lady's Chapel.

John Paston, Esq., born 1420. Married before 1440, when he studied the law in the Inner Temple. He was one of the executors of the will of Sir John Fastolf, to which his cousin Hugh Fenn was supervisor. His estates were seized by Edward IV., and he was committed to the Fleet just before his death, which happened in London on 26th of May, 1466. He was buried very sumptuously at Bromholm Priory in Norfolk. = **Margaret, daughter and heir of John Mauteby, Esq., by Margaret, daughter of John Berney, Esq., of Reedham.** Her will is dated 4th Feb., 1481, and proved 18th Dec. 1484. She was buried at Mauteby.

Edmund Paston, Esq., born 1425. His will is dated 21st March, 1448.

Walter Paston.

William Paston had disputes with his nephews concerning their estates, &c.

Clement Paston, born 1442. Was at London under the care of Master Grenefeld in 1457.

Elizabeth Paston, born about 1429. She lived with Lady Pole in 1457, and was alive in 1485. Married, first, Robert Poynings; second, Sir George Browne, Kt., of Beechworth Castle, in Surrey.

Sir John Paston, Kt., born about 1440. He took possession of his father's estates by a warrant from Edward IV., dated 6 July, 1466; was a brave soldier; performed many gallant actions in the French wars, and was the king's champion at Eltham. He died unmarried on 15 November, 1479, 19 Edward IV. aged nearly forty years, and was buried in London. He left a natural daughter, named Constance.

John Paston, Esq., appears to have been brought up in the family of the Duke of Norfolk; was a soldier, and engaged in the French wars. He attended the Princess Margaret to Bruges in 1468; was heir to his brother in 1479, and in 1485 High Sheriff of Norfolk. He was knighted, and made a knight banneret at the battle of Stoke, by Henry VII. in 1487, and died in 1503. = **Margery, daughter of Thomas Brews, of Stinton Hall, in Salle, by Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Giles, and sister and heir of Sir Gilbert Debenham.** She was married in 1477, and, dying in 1495, was buried in the White Friars in Norwich, where her husband was afterwards interred.

William Paston was at Eton in 1467.

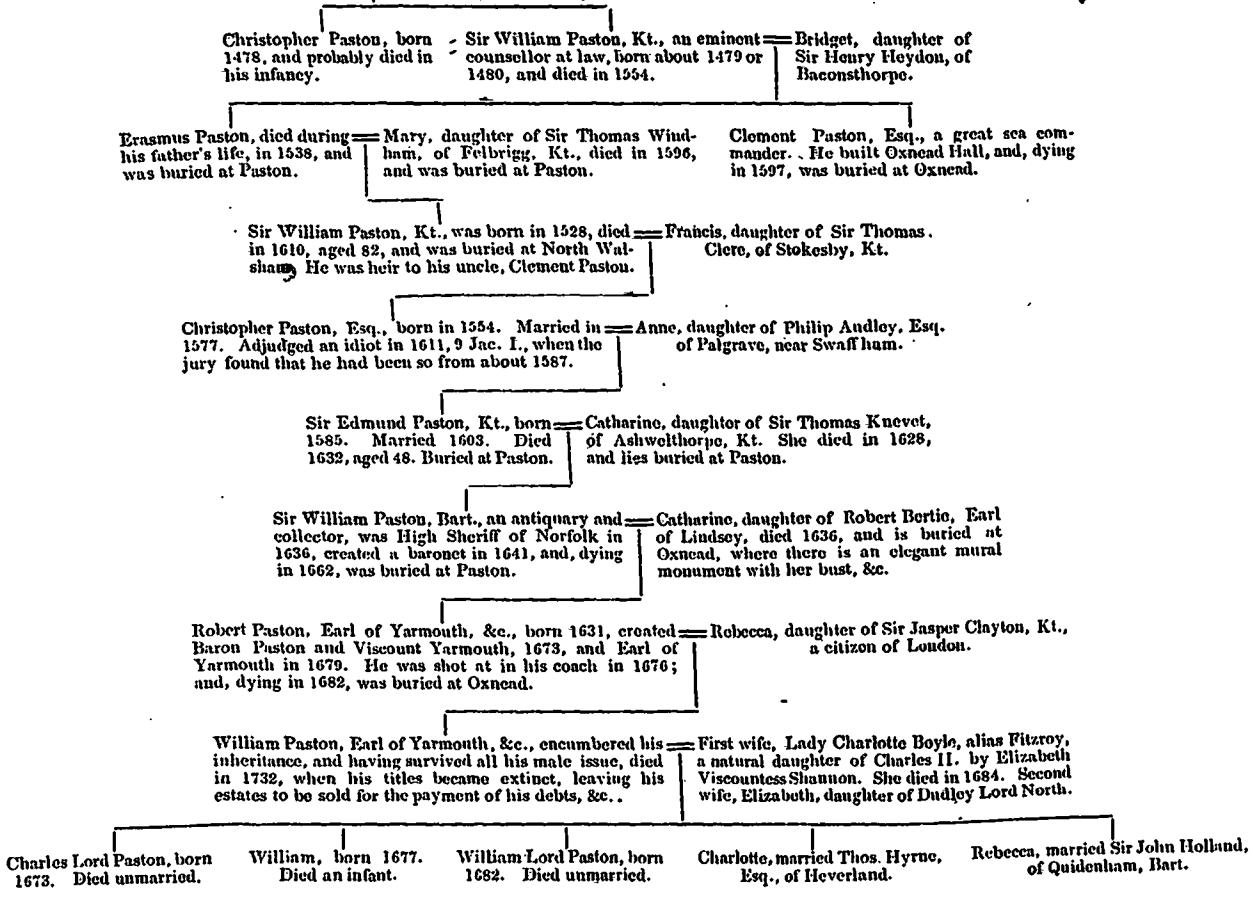
Clement Paston.

Walter Paston took a degree, and died at Oxford in 1479.

Edmund Paston was in the garrison at Calais in 1473. He was twice married, and died about 1504.

Anne Paston, married Wm. Yelverton, son of John, son of Sir William Yelverton, the judge.

Margery Paston, married Richard Calle.


Christopher Paston, born 1478, and probably died in his infancy.
Sir William Paston, Kt., an eminent counsellor at law, born about 1479 or 1480, and died in 1554.
Bridget, daughter of Sir Henry Heydon, of Baconsthorpe.
Erasmus Paston, died during his father's life, in 1538, and was buried at Paston.
Mary, daughter of Sir Thomas Windham, of Felbrigg, Kt., died in 1596, and was buried at Paston.
Clement Paston, Esq., a great sea commander. He built Oxnead Hall, and, dying in 1597, was buried at Oxnead.
Sir William Paston, Kt., was born in 1528, died in 1610, aged 82, and was buried at North Walsham. He was heir to his uncle, Clement Paston.
Francis, daughter of Sir Thomas Clere, of Stokesby, Kt.
Christopher Paston, Esq., born in 1554. Married in 1577. Adjudged an idiot in 1611, 9 Jac. I., when the jury found that he had been so from about 1587.
Anne, daughter of Philip Audley, Esq. of Palgrave, near Swaffham.
Sir Edmund Paston, Kt., born 1585. Married 1603. Died 1632, aged 48. Buried at Paston.
Catharine, daughter of Sir Thomas Knevet, of Ashwellthorpe, Kt. She died in 1628, and lies buried at Paston.
Sir William Paston, Bart., an antiquary and collector, was High Sheriff of Norfolk in 1636, created a baronet in 1641, and, dying in 1662, was buried at Paston.
Catharine, daughter of Robert Bertie, Earl of Lindsey, died 1636, and is buried at Oxnead, where there is an elegant mural monument with her bust, &c.
Robert Paston, Earl of Yarmouth, &c., born 1631, created Baron Paston and Viscount Yarmouth, 1673, and Earl of Yarmouth in 1679. He was shot at in his coach in 1676; and, dying in 1682, was buried at Oxnead.
Rebecca, daughter of Sir Jasper Clayton, Kt., a citizen of London.
William Paston, Earl of Yarmouth, &c., encumbered his inheritance, and having survived all his male issue, died in 1732, when his titles became extinct, leaving his estates to be sold for the payment of his debts, &c..
First wife, Lady Charlotte Boyle, alias Fitzroy, a natural daughter of Charles II. by Elizabeth Viscountess Shannon. She died in 1684. Second wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Dudley Lord North.
Charles Lord Paston, born 1673. Died unmarried.
William, born 1677. Died an infant.
William Lord Paston, born 1682. Died unmarried.
Charlotte, married Thos. Hyrne, Esq., of Heverland.
Rebecca, married Sir John Holland, of Quidenham, Bart.

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